

LIFE AND LETTERS

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THE WELSH REVIEW

Editor : GWYN JONES

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Welsh Profile, 6 : Sir Frederick Rees	<i>Anon</i>
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LIFE AND LETTERS

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edited by Robert Herring

Vol. 54	CONTENTS	No. 119
EDITORIAL		page 1
ARTICLES		
OROMANCY, <i>by G. R. de Beer</i>		6
ARTISTIC THEORY IN JAMES JOYCE, <i>by Geddes MacGregor</i>		18
PLANT COLLECTING IN SOUTH AFRICA, <i>by W. L. Carter</i>		28
POEMS		
GOOD FRIEND (Part II), <i>by H. D.</i>		35
LAURENCE OLIVIER'S RICHARD III, <i>by Charles Causley</i>		42
STORIES		
THE PILGRIMAGE, <i>by Diana Gardner</i>		43
THE HOUSE OF TREES, <i>by Kenneth F. Hammitt</i>		49
DRAMA		
SHAKESPEARE AND JONSON, <i>by H. K. Fisher</i>		63
REVIEWS OF BOOKS, <i>by John Vauxhall, Alwyn Andrew, Gwyn Jones, D. L. Hobman, Donald G. MacRae, Robin King, F. J. Brown, Charles Calvert.</i>		71
<i>Typography by Seán Jennett</i>		
<i>American Correspondent: Norman Holmes Pearson</i>		

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LIFE AND LETTERS

continuing The London Mercury
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Vol. 54	CONTENTS	No. 120
EDITORIAL		page 93
ARTICLES		
SIMÓN BOLÍVAR, THE LIBERATOR, <i>by Jorge Luciani</i>		96
THE EMANCIPATION OF SPANISH SOUTH AMERICA, <i>by Robin A. Humphreys</i>		102
BALLADS		
POPULAR FOLK SONGS, <i>translated by Minam Blanco-Fombona</i>		112
ARTICLE		
LATIN-AMERICAN STUDIES IN GREAT BRITAIN, <i>by William C. Atkinson</i>		114
TWO POETS		
THE COUNTRY CHILD, <i>by Miguel Otero Silva</i>		124
THE CART OF THE MAIZE GLEANER, <i>by Jacinto Fombona Pachano</i>		128
ARTICLE		
ANDRÉS BELLO, <i>by Luis Cabana</i>		130
CONTEMPORARY NOVELS		
THE SPECTRE OF LA BARQUERENA, <i>by Rómulo Gallegos</i>		135
THE DREAM, <i>by Miriam Blanco-Fombona</i>		146
STORY		
THE GLORY OF MAMPORAL, <i>by Andres Eloy Blanco</i>		150
REVIEWS OF BOOKS, <i>by Violet Clifton, Donald G. MacRae, Chun-Chan Yeh, J. M. Nosworthy, Roy Walker, Hugo Manning, J. B. Pick, Neville Braybrooke, Oswald Blakeston.</i>		157

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Fritz” — *Mascagni* - DB 6459

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EDITORIAL

July 1947

MANY problems beset us to-day. Most of them, as I see it, irrelevant. Since we have apparently made up our minds that the only use we can make of atomic energy is to destroy ourselves, why do we bother about anything else? Work, for instance. What can work give us? Not what we want. That is leisure, not labour. Leisure to learn and to develop peace in our minds. But when they say 'Work or Want', they mean only—'or lack'. Lack material things.

Policy, both home and foreign, is dictated by this materialist outlook. The material position of any country which goes into two major wars in twenty-five years is bound to be poor; material problems are bound to be pressing, and no one wants airy high-mindedness before practical issues are attended to. But there are ways of attending to them, and what we want is what we have worked for—new ways of dealing with old problems, not just the old ways of dealing with every problem. What we get, however, are the ambitions of the last era being belatedly fulfilled at the expense of what should be the aspirations of the new.

We bring up people to expect, and demand, more and more materially. Then we face them with the fact that world-supply has broken down. We spend large sums on teaching geography and modern languages, and then threaten to bar foreign travel. We 'keep down' the cost of living by subsidizing produce out of taxes paid by the consumer of that produce. We talk glibly of the days of greed, cut-throat competition, and possessiveness being over—and then in pep-talk and poster appeal to precisely those qualities.

All this is to be expected; it is the way of politicians. But how much longer have we to expect that people will tolerate it or that politicians will avoid having to admit they are seen through?

We have, it is true, replaced religion with politics. The new 'faith' is politics, just as the new ruling class is that of the managers. To-day, most of our difficulties are hailed as legacies from the Bad Old Days. Most of life is, in one form or another, a legacy and our skill in living depends on how we handle it, not on the names we find for those parts which test our powers. To-day we do not handle it very well, because the machine which we created to do the dirty work for us—the governing—has got out of hand. As in so many walks of life, the machine, invention of the Industrial Age, has become the master. To-day, 'nationalism' is—officially—at a discount; it is 'nationalization' we are invited to applaud; and patriotism is, as usual after a war, demoded, deplored, and disliked; largely because so many of the young, who are invited to die before they have begun to live, met on foreign service the peoples, conditions, and landscape of countries they had not previously had time or means to see. It is natural, therefore, that the State should for a time usurp the place of the Country. But whereas a country is a concept, a complex of ideas and feelings, the State is merely the machine devised for smoother living in that country. But we know what happens to machines; when they work well, they attract 'passengers', and when they don't, they cause strikes, shortages, and a sense of frustration, because men have forgotten how to use their hands or hearts.

It is therefore with alarm that one views two aspects of Stâteocemia of some relevance to both authors and readers—the inquiry into the freedom of the Press, and the suggestion, put forth by some writers in some quarters, for State Aid. The former has been dealt with by Mr. Kingsley Martin, the latter by Mr. J. B. Priestley. Both seem to me rather woolly. It is hard for me to judge Mr. Martin's book; as a journalist, I knew his facts already and as one who had the honour to be, though humbly, on the *Manchester Guardian* for some years, I feel the answer is simple—the old *Manchester Guardian*. The fact remains, however, that there is only sufficient public to support one *Manchester Guardian*. Mr. Martin calls his book *The Press the Public Wants*. It's really the Press he wants, but apart from that, I would go further; I would have the Public

the Press, the decent Press, wants. It's the freedom of the Public I'm against ; not the freedom of the Press, but of the Public—its freedom to be coarse, common, mean-minded, lied to, flattered, misled, bolstered up and beaten down. I'm against all the things that have made it what it is. In fact, I'm against mankind. I'm against Genesis as well as the gutter-press.

I don't see that you improve mankind by removing or controlling one form of his lack of taste; that will only produce another form. What you have to do is slowly to cultivate his taste and realize that, as with all forms of cultivation, it takes a lot of bad to produce a little good. But that little is strong enough in time to become the norm of judgment, acceptability and recognized standard from which further effort is made. At present, good and bad are encouraged to infect each other with a far from golden mediocrity.

Mr. Priestley in his pamphlet, *The Arts under Socialism*, is at pains to stress the artist's need for independence. 'What we want is more art.' Lots of it . . . lovely art . . . isn't it splendid, here's some more art coming along I begin to think I don't know what people mean by art. It saves me from much discussion and limits my reading, no doubt. It saves me a lot of time, too, and an enormous amount of temper. If by 'art', people mean the result of a burning conviction that their purpose, their use, theirs only and their sole one, is to give form to the intangible fears, hopes, and findings of man so that in future other men may be encouraged in their speculations and consoled for their shortcomings—why, then, I don't see what there is to talk about. It's either your mission in life, or it isn't. If it's your mission, then you have so much to learn, permanently, and have to live so hard every minute, I don't see what you are doing, stepping aside to talk about it. 'More art,' 'lots of art,' indeed—why not less? What's it matter, in quantity? And why should the Arts be *under* Socialism? By their nature they are *above* everything.

This may be temperamental of me, for Mr. Priestley knows his public, and he knows his rôle to that public. As Honest Jack, Bluff Jack, he does, on behalf of his less fortunate fellows, seek to prepare an atmosphere in which their wares will receive

market-value. Some of his suggestions are naive—for instance, that a certain kind of artist would find a happy life in some half-time job which did not make too much demands on him, such as a library. It remains open to doubt what kind of 'art' such a meek being would produce. He makes the suggestion that, since the days of wealthy patrons are over, the public itself should become patrons, each member subscribing a token of appreciation. High time! But is life as simple as that—that whereas one patron gave a living to a poet, now fifty smaller ones will? And where is the difference? Save that the poet, instead of pleasing one, would now have to please fifty. Whereas he rarely pleases even himself.

The living conditions of artists undeniably need amelioration. One can have nothing but praise for the action of the Society of Authors in pillorying the B.B.C. But working conditions are different from living conditions. A man may be forced to be a miner, a factory worker, an agricultural labourer, through economic conditions. An artist is forced to be an artist by nothing but his own conscience. He may die in the attempt; so do miners, so do soldiers in their callings. His works may not be accepted—but unlike any other being save a lover, he needs no external reward.

This is not romanticizing. An artist, like lesser beings, has to live. We are thankful to all who try to secure him recognition equal to that of, say, a taxi-driver or a domestic servant. But if he accepts State, or any other aid, he is also to accept its corollary—State approval. It may be said that present-day competition makes it necessary for him to seek approval anyhow. The answer to that is—who decides if he is an artist? His own conscience or a committee? Is he going to trade his most priceless possession—the freedom to create what he believes in without reference to the law of supply and demand—in return for security? And if he is, hasn't he, as he comes down by that to the level of everyone else, the same right as they?—to demand security from those he pays for that purpose? It is a good idea that we show signs of tiring of keeping the State and now ask the State to keep us. But is the State capable? There is only one answer to that, and it rests in these facts: Krupp was a capitalist, he represented power through

individual initiative: Hitler represented the State and did, at a rough guess, as much harm. Our own Press lords are not exactly servants of the community—but let it not be forgotten how many of them were created by a member of a Government; we have no guarantee other Governments would not be as gullible (one of the most enlightening facts in Mr. Martin's book is that the most fighting speech against Press Lords came not from Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, but from Mr. Baldwin). Finally, the atomic bomb was let loose by a Coalition. Which condones nothing, but is worth remembering.

What, however, explains everything—or so I dare think—are the words of Lao Tse—

'The more craft and cunning men have,
The more useless and pernicious contraptions will they invent.
The more laws and edicts are imposed,
The more thieves and bandits there will be.'

Hence these sayings of a Sage:

'If I work through Non-action, the people will transform themselves.

If I love the Stillness, the people will grow righteous of themselves.

If I do not fuss or interfere, the people will grow wealthy of themselves;

If I am free from desire, the people will return to unspoiled simplicity.'

The reminder that

'The sages of old sought to be neither the isolated single gem nor yet a common stone among common stones,'

and what I take to be the only true aim—

'Is it not because he seeks no personal success that all his aims are fulfilled?'¹

¹ *The Way of Acceptance*. Lao Tse's Tao Tê Ching. Hermon Ould. Daker. 5s. 1946.

OROMANCY

G. R. de BEER

I OFTEN wonder how many of the people who in our day go to the Alps to take their holidays realize what an interesting phenomenon they present. They incur expense, expose themselves to fatigue, and sometimes undergo hardship, all because of an idea that the Alps are pleasant places. For a century and a half, this idea has held sway, and it is customary and doubtless right to attribute its inception to the works and examples of Albrecht von Haller, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and William Wordsworth. It is related to the origin of the romantic movement, not only in literature but also in music and in art. It is surely not fortuitous that, as the late Logan Pearsall Smith¹ showed, the first use of the word romantic in its application to scenery in English, German, and in French, was in description of Switzerland, the Alps, and similar mountains.

At earlier times in Europe this would have been incomprehensible. A few isolated people, like Cristobal de Virues, Conrad Gesner and Francesco Petrarca would have understood it perfectly, but they were exceptional. On going back in time still further, there is nothing but darkness until we reach the light of Rome and Greece; and we can ask what mountains meant to them.

Among those who have interested themselves in this question is Norman Young,² who devoted an essay of great erudition and sincerity to the study of mountains in Greek poetry. In all the *Odyssey* he finds barely twenty lines descriptive of mountains: not one line in Hesiod appreciative of them. With the exception of Atlas, not one mountain in Greek literature does he find endowed with the attributes of an animate being, or, in other words, accorded the treatment

¹ 'Four Words,' *S.P.E. Tracts*, 17, 1924.

² 'The Mountains in Greek Poetry,' *Oxford Mountaineering Essays*, Ed. A. H. M. Lunn, London, 1912.

which Ruskin described as the 'pathetic fallacy'. When it comes to the use of simile, mountains are made to serve as illustrations of large and ugly people, as for instance the queen of the Laestrygones:

τὴν δὲ γυναῖκα
εὔρον ὅσῃν τ' ὄρεος κορυφήν, κατὰ δ' ἔστρυγον αὐτήν.

(Od. x, 112),

'she was huge of bulk as a mountain-peak and loathsome to see.'

Young seeks to explain this point of view by the hardship which mountains cause to their inhabitants: 'To such men,' he says, 'the mountains do not represent beauty and strength and freedom, but an amazing waste of the surface of the earth, useless deserts from which every acre of lowland and slope must be redeemed for crops and vineyards.' In such a light did the Greeks see their mountains.

I do not wish to disagree with this, for it is probably in the main true. Yet I wonder if it is the whole truth. Julius Charles Hare was interested in this same question, and I cannot do better than quote from his work,¹ for it is almost forgotten. 'It is a mistake however to conclude that men are insensible to those beauties, which they are not continually talking about and analysing—that the love of Nature is a new feeling, because the taste for the Picturesque is a modern taste. When the mountaineer descends into the plain, he soon begins to pine with love for his native hills; and many have been known to fall sick, nay, even to die, of that love. Yet, had he never left them, you would never have heard him prate about them. When I was on the Lake of Zug, which lies bosomed among such grand mountains, the boatman, after telling some stories about Suwarrow's march through the neighbourhood, asked me, *Is it true, that he came from a country where there is not a mountain to be seen?*—*Yes*, I replied: *you may go hundreds of miles without coming to one.*—*That must be beautiful!* he exclaimed: *dass muss schon seyn!* His exclamation was prompted no doubt by the thought of the difficulties which the mountains about him opposed to traffic and agriculture. . . .

¹ *Guesses at Truth by Two Brothers*, London, 1851.

This very man, however, had he been transported to the plains he sighed for . . . would probably have been seized with the homesickness which is so common among his countrymen. . . .’

And by way of conclusion, Hare continues: ‘though a taste for the picturesque, as the very form of the word *picturesque* which betrays its recent origin implies, is a late growth, a kind of aftermath in the mind of a people, which cannot arise until a nation has gone through a long process of intellectual culture, nor indeed until after the first crop has been gathered in, still a feeling and love for the beauties of Nature may exist altogether independently of that self-conscious, self-analysing taste, and that such a feeling is sure to spring up, wherever there is nourishment for it, in a nation’s vernal prime.’

Arnold Lunn¹ has also devoted much thought to this problem and is struck by the Greek lack of sense of personality in nature, and by the rarity of the pathetic fallacy in Greek literature. He concludes that the Greeks only liked Nature in so far as Nature was disciplined for human use and subservient to human comfort. The Roman attitude he thinks was slightly nearer to our own, and he contrasts both Greek and Roman with the Hebrew, for ‘it is to the mountains that the Hebrew turns for a simile to suggest the supreme reality of the universe.’

This again may be true. And yet, if any reader were to conclude from it that Greek and Roman literature contained no passages of the very greatest beauty relating to mountains, he would miss a great deal.

Let me begin with a passage from the fragments of Alcman of the seventh century B.C. which appears to me to be full, not only of familiarity with the life of the mountain-dweller, but with appreciation for it:

πολλάκι δ’ ἐν κορυφαῖς ὀρέων, ὅκα
θεοῖσιν ἄδη πολύφανος ἑορτά,
χρῦσιον ἄγγος ἔχουσα μέγαν σκύφον,
οἷά τε ποιμένες ἄνδρες ἔχουσιν,
χερσὶ λεόντειον γάλα θήσας,
τυρὸν ἐτύρησας μέγαν ἄτρυφον, ἀργιφόνταν.

¹ *Switzerland and the English*, London, 1944.

'often on the mountain summits, during a feast well-lit with torches and pleasing to the gods, holding a bowl such as is used by shepherd men, but of gold, and pouring therein lioness's milk with thy hands thou didst make a mighty cheese, whole and gleaming white' (frag. 47).¹

There is something astonishingly modern about this passage. And in another, Alcman indulges in the pathetic fallacy as well as anybody, when describing the quiet stillness that had fallen over the mountains:

εὔδουσι δ' ὀρέων κορυφαί τε καὶ φάραγγες,
πρώονές τε καὶ χαράδραι,

'The peaks of the mountains and the watercourses lie asleep, the promontories and ravines' (frag. 36).

And must it not also be ascribed to pathetic fallacy when Theocritus speaks of

Ἀἴτνα, μήτηρ ἔμμε
'Aetna, my Mother,'

or Pindar of

χιονοτρόφος Κιθαίρων

'Cithaeron nurse of snow,'

or when Sophocles makes the Chorus say

εἴπερ ἐγὼ μάντις εἰμὶ καὶ κατὰ γνώμαν ἴδρις
οὐ τὸν Ὀλυμπόν ὀπείρων,
ὦ Κιθαίων, οὐκ ἔσῃ τὰν αὔριον
πανσέληνον, μὴ οὐ σέ γε καὶ πατριώταν Οἰδίπουν
καὶ τροφὸν καὶ ματέρ' αὔξειν,

(Oed. Tyr. 1086.)

'If I am a seer and wise at heart,
O Cithaeron, thou shalt not fail
(By yonder heaven thou shalt not)
To know to-morrow, when the moon is full,
That Oedipus honours thee,
His native height, his nurse, his mother';²

There are actually also examples of the use of καλός,

¹ I owe this reference, and others, to the kindness of Professor J. F. Lockwood.

² I owe this reference, and others, to the kindness of Professor W. M. Edwards.

beautiful, as applied to mountains.¹ One is in the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite*:

ἢ τις Νυμφῶν, αἴτ' ἄλσεα καλὰ νέμονται,
ἢ Νυμφῶν, αἵ καλὸν ὄρος τόδε ναιετάουσι
καὶ πηγὰς ποταμῶν καὶ πρίσσεα ποιήεντα.

'Either some one of the Nymphs who range over the fair groves, or of the Nymphs who dwell on yonder beautiful mountain and by the river springs and grassy pastures . . .' (97-9).

Another is in Plato's *Critias*:

τὸ δὲ περὶ αὐτὸν ὄρη τότε ὑμνεῖτο πλῆθος καὶ μέγεθος καὶ κάλλος
παρὰ πάντα τὰ νῦν ὄντα γεγονέναι.

'He celebrated the surrounding mountains for their number and size and beauty, in which they exceeded all that are now to be seen anywhere . . .' (118 B).

In spite of assertions to the contrary, the Greeks were not incapable of painting word-pictures, even including mountains, as for instance Euripides:

Παρνησιάδες δ' ἄβατοι κορυφαὶ
καταλαμπόμεναι τὴν ἡμερίαν
ἄψιδα βροτοῖσι δέχονται

'The untrodden peaks of Parnassus shine forth and welcome for mortals the rim of the new day' (Ion. 86).

Nothing but genius and a very sympathetic approach to mountain scenery could have led to such a metaphor in which the ridge of the mountain is made to conjure up the sharpness of commencement of the dawn.

Lastly, there is an example of burlesque in Lucian's fantastic story of Hermes acting as guide to Charon when he came up from hell on a holiday to have a look round. 'In a word, Charon, we want a high place of some sort, from which you can look down on everything': and with this object they pile Pelion upon Ossa and add Oeta and Parnassus on top. Hermes goes up and invites Charon to follow him, but the tourist, unaccustomed to such exercises and nervous, appeals to his guide,

*Ορεξον, ὦ Ἑρμῆ, τὴν χεῖρα· οὐ γὰρ ἐπὶ μικράν με ταύτην
μηχανὴν ἀναβιβάζεις

¹ G. Soutar, *Nature in Greek Poetry*, Oxford, 1939.

'Put out your hand, Hermes. This is an uncommonly big piece of stage scenery that you are making me ascend.'

To which Hermes replies,

Οὐκ ἐνὶ δὲ ἄμφω καὶ ἀσφαλῆ καὶ φιλοθεάμονα εἶναι.

'One cannot see a fine view without taking risks.'

Turning now to Latin literature, the position is not dissimilar from the Greek. The anonymous author of *Aetna*, of about the first century, might easily have found a place in the writings of the end of the eighteenth when men had found Nature and were as keen on it as a child with a new toy:

artificis naturae ingens opus aspice; nulla
nam tanta humanis rebus spectacula cernes (600).

'Look upon the vast work of nature the artist, for you will see no spectacle so great from the hand of man.'

There are also cases of the pathetic fallacy. Among the portents for the civil war, Lucan includes the curious behaviour of the Alps:

veteremque iugis nutantibus Alpes
discussisse nivem (Phars. 1, 553).

'The peaks of the Alps quivered and shook off their eternal snow.'

In the same context, Virgil says:

insolitus tremuerunt motibus Alpes (Georg. 1, 75).

'The Alps shuddered with unusual motion'

The mountains also talked. Propertius makes Mount Ida disclose some secrets:

quamvis Ida Parum pastorem dicat amasse (2, 32, 35).

'Although Ida asserts that the shepherd Paris loved . . .'

Virgil, who was no stranger to Alps or Apennines, was very fond of making his mountains loquacious. Sometimes they are joyful:

ipsi laetitia voces ad sidera iactant
intonsi montes; ipsae iam carmina rupes
ipsa sonant arbusta: 'deus, deus ille, Menalca! (Ecl. v, 62).

'The very mountains, with woods unshorn, joyously fling their voices to the stars; the very rocks, the very groves ring out the song: "A god is he, a god, Menalcas!"'

Or again:

Maenalus argutum que nemus pinosque loquentis
semper habet, semper pastorum ille audit amores
Panaque, qui primus calamos non passus inertis (Ecl. viii, 22).

'Maenalus hath ever tuneful groves and speaking pines; ever doth he listen to the loves of shepherds and to Pan who first awoke the idle reeds.'

On the tragic side the mountains know how to lament:

Daphni, tuum Poenos etiam ingemuisse leones
interitum montesque feri silvaeque loquuntur (Ecl. v, 27).

'Daphnis, the wild mountains and woods tell us that even African lions mourned over thy death.'

Or again:

pinifer illum etiam sola sub rupe iacentem
Maenalus et gelidi fleverunt saxa Lycae (Ecl. x, 14).

'Pine-covered Maenalus and the frozen cliffs of Lycaeus mourned him lying beneath the lonely rock.'

The mountains not only talked, but they occasionally also listened, as in Statius:

audiat et medius caeli Parnassus et asper
Eurotas, dubiamque iugo fragor impulit Oeten
in latus . . . (Thebaid i, 118).

'Midway in heaven, Parnassus heard the sound and the Eurotas, and the crashing din smote Oeta on her side . . .'

Latin literature also provides examples of word-pictures. Virgil could not have written the following had he not been familiar with mountain scenery:

et iam summa procul villarum culmina fumant
maioresque cadunt altis de montibus umbrae (Ecl. i, 82).

'And now afar off the smoke curls up from the cottage roofs, and from the high mountains the larger shadows fall.'

Lastly, there is a passage in Virgil in which he was concerned to warn a friend from some of the dangers of an Alpine winter, but which could really have been found in the letter of any lover of to-day to his love indulging in winter sports at, say, Sedrun:

tu procul a patria (nec sit mihi credere tantum)
 Alpinas a! dura, nives et frigora Rheni
 me sine sola vides. A! te ne frigora laedant
 A! tibi ne teneras glacies secet aspera plantas! (Ecl. x, 47).

'And as for you, far from home (I can hardly bring myself to think about it) you are gazing, you heartless one, on Alpine snows and the frost-bound Rhine. I only hope that you do not get frostbite, or cut your tender feet on a piece of ice.'

Surely it would be a pity to ignore these expressions of feeling by Greeks and Romans towards mountains, even if the early theologians did rely on the unlikeliness of any enterprising person discrediting their entire system when they threw security to the winds and gave away the exact location of Zeus's main headquarters.

Accepting, then, the view that the Greeks and Romans were unlikely to have founded any alpine clubs, I turn to other peoples, and first to the Hebrews. 'Because the Hebrew attitude to nature is infinitely more spiritual than the Greeks,' says Arnold Lunn, 'the pathetic fallacy is as common in Hebrew as it is rare in Greek literature.' The Psalms provide many examples of this:

The little hills rejoice on every side. The pastures are clothed with flocks; the valleys also are covered over with corn, they shout for joy, they also sing (Ps. 65, 12).

And Isaiah:

The mountains and hills shall break forth before you into singing (55, 12).

But the peoples who interest me most are the far-eastern. From Younghill Kang's book¹ on Korea I learn that

'The Diamond Mountain Ridge is more famed throughout the orient than any in China or Japan. . . . Everywhere were peaks of yellow granite, some taking by themselves, strange shapes, others carved gigantically by man. The monks, in talking of them, did not discriminate between the two kinds. "See that beautiful lady there? that lion? that dog? that elephant? that pilgrim monk? and they would point to some distant peak which was an image and a symbol. Thus they

¹ *The Grass Roof*. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York and London, 1931.

made Nature tell the legends of Buddha for them. The whole Diamond Range was a temple." It would be hard to find a better example of the pathetic fallacy.'

Lastly, China. On consulting Lin Yutang's work *My Country and My People*,¹ my interest was immediately aroused by what he has to say about religion and art. 'Buddhism provides the Chinese with a chance to enjoy mountain scenery, for most Buddhist temples are situated on high mountains at scenic spots.' And the Chinese are even richer than that, for in addition to their Buddhist temples in the mountains, doing duty as youth hostels and places of pilgrimage, or club huts, their Taoist philosophy is also intimately and pleasurably associated with mountains.

'By placing one's ancestors' tombs in a beautiful scenery, overlooking those dragon mountains and lion hills, one can bring good luck and prosperity to the dead man's descendants.' This is part of Chinese geomancy and must be classed as superstition. And yet, if my family vault were in the Alps, and if I were pious enough to visit it very frequently, I cannot help feeling that it would do me good. Only, as mountains are the most powerful agents in this geomancy, I shall coin the word *oromancy* to describe this property of theirs. This will enable me to refer to Ruskin, Leslie Stephen, and Arnold Lunn as oromantic writers.

Oromancy also plays a very important part in Chinese art. 'The Chinese artist,' Lin Yutang continues, 'does not learn painting by going into a room and stripping a woman naked in order to study her anatomy. . . . The Chinese artist travels and visits the famous mountains like Huangshan in Anhui or the Omei mountains in Szechuan. . . . The retreat to the mountains is a search for grandeur in nature . . . also a search for moral elevation. . . .'

With this obviously deep and real appreciation of mountain scenery it was not surprising to find that the Chinese also indulge in the pathetic fallacy. 'To the Chinese, the mountains and rivers are alive, and in many of the winding ridges of mountains we see the dragon's back, and where the mountains gradually descend and merge into the plain or the sea we see

¹ London, Heinemann, 1936.

the dragon's tail.' Needless to say, it is a far greater compliment to a mountain to liken it to a dragon than to a man. Plus je vois les hommes, plus j'aime mon dragon.

This aspect of oromancy has a very interesting effect on Chinese aesthetic theory in art and poetry. In art it accounts for the fact that a Chinese picture is supposed to be painted looking down from a very high mountain. In literature it provides the basis for pictorial poetry in the form of word-pictures in which the relative elevation of the various elements is the key:

'In the mountains a night of rain,
And above the trees a hundred springs,'

could hardly be expressed more vividly.

My appetite whetted by these examples, I decided to consult Chinese poetry for further instances of oromancy. Arthur Waley once told me that the suitability of the English idiom for Chinese poetry was quite uncanny, and I never realized how true his words were until I examined Chinese poetry for traces of oromancy. The following brief extracts from his translations¹ will show this clearly.

Even their titles ring a true oromantic note. How else can one account for Po Chu-i (772-846) giving one of his poems the title 'Madly singing in the Mountains'? Even more clearly does the oromantic urge in a tired black-coated worker emerge from another poem:

'Having Climbed to the top-most peak of the Incense-Burner Mountain

Up and up, the Incense-Burner Peak!

In my heart is stored what my eyes and ears perceived.

All the year—detained by official business;

To-day at last I got a chance to go.

Grasping the creepers, I clung to dangerous rocks;

My hands and feet—weary with groping for hold.

There came with me three or four friends,

But two friends dared not go further.

At last we reached the top-most crest of the Peak;

My eyes were blinded, my soul rocked and reeled.

The chasm beneath me—ten thousand feet;

The ground I stood on, only a foot wide.

If you have not exhausted the scope of seeing and hearing,

¹ *A Hundred and Seventy Chinese Poems*. London, Constable, 1923.

How can you realize the wideness of the world?
The waters of the river look narrow as a ribbon,
P'ên Castle smaller than a man's fist.
How it clings, the dust of the world's halter!
It chokes my limbs: I cannot shake it away.
Thinking of retirement, I heaved an envious sigh,
Then, with lowered head, came back to the Ants' Nest.'

I find it stunning to realize that while we in western Europe have only been able to think like this for about a century, it has been common form with the Chinese for a millennium. Indeed, there is a poem by a woman, Tao-yün, called 'Climbing a Mountain', about A.D. 400. Nor is this an isolated example. Let me quote from the poems of the T'ang Dynasty translated by Soame Jenyns,¹ and in particular that by Han Yu:

The Hill Rocks (extract)

'A clear moon rises above the mountain and shines in through the door.

At earliest dawn under bright heavens I go on my way alone,
I cannot see my path (because it is so early)

Now losing it, now striking it again,
Stumbling and recovering, lost in mist and haze.

The hills are bathed in red, the mountain streams show blue;
Numerous (streams) sparkle and meander on their way;

From time to time I see pine and oak ten spans round,
When my path crosses a stream I wade over the stones with bare feet;

The sound of the water tinkles in my ears,
The wind blows through my clothes,
If only life were always like this—how happy man might be!

Here is an extract from the poem by Po Chu-i written when he was 65:

Going to the Mountains with a little Dancing-Girl, aged Fifteen

'You who are really a lady of silks and satins
Are now become my hill and stream companion! . . .'

But the final proof of our oromantic communion with the Chinese is to be found in another poem by the same writer, written when he was over 70 years old:

¹ *A Further Selection from the Three Hundred Poems of The T'ang Dynasty.* London, John Murray, 1944.

A Dream of Mountaineering

'At night, in my dream, I stoutly climbed a mountain,
Going out alone with my staff of holly-wood.
A thousand crags, a hundred hundred valleys—
In my dream-journey none were unexplored
And all the while my feet never grew tired
And my step was as strong as in my young days.
Can it be that when the mind travels backward
The body also returns to its old state?
And can it be, as between body and soul,
that the body may languish, while the soul is still strong?
Soul and body—both are vanities:
Dreaming and waking—both alike unreal.
In the day my feet are palsied and tottering;
In the night my steps go striding over the hills.
As day and night are divided in equal parts—
Between the two, I *get* as much as I *lose* '

The modern equivalent of this profession of oromantic faith is to be found in the words of Shelley's friend, Thomas Hookham¹:

'Another day of sunshine and joy has passed, leaving such vivid traces of the delicious intensity of my happiness that my remembrance of it will be as inerasible as the wild and stupendous scenes through which I have passed. A current of transport has coursed my veins throughout the day. I have sighed, I have been motionless, I have been speechless with joy. I did not suppose that the human frame was capable, for hours in succession, of enjoyment so exquisite; and I feel confident, that the scenery of Switzerland alone can generate such emotions: even while I write, recollection realizes my transports, and my eyes are filled with the tears of joy: may these sensations visit my frame in after years, when age shall rob my limbs of their vigour, and circumscribe the feeble efforts of exercise to a garden, an orchard, and its adjoining copse.'

Po Chü-i had provided Hookham with his answer, a thousand years before.

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¹ *A Walk through Switzerland in September, 1816*, London, 1818.

ARTISTIC THEORY IN JAMES JOYCE

GEDDES MacGREGOR

IN *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, one of Joyce's easiest novels, there is some reference to an artistic theory. But in a fragmentary early version of that work, the manuscript of which is now in the Harvard College Library, and which was published three years ago as *Stephen Hero*, one may find peculiarly interesting and explicit passages omitted from the work in its final form. Here is presented very ingenuously a theory which may throw considerable light on the later Joycean technique. In *Ulysses* and other later works there are but passing allusions to such a theory. Even in the finished *Portrait* Joyce has begun to pontificate, and in *Ulysses* he speaks with all the *hauteur* of the artistic temperament letting art speak for itself. It is from the immature Joyce that we may hope to understand some of the principles that lie behind his later telegraphic utterances.

Much of what Joyce's *alter ego* says in his paper on æsthetics in the early draft of the *Portrait* is in fact extremely superficial, much more superficial than it evidently professed to be. It was certainly also not original by the time the manuscript was written. The influence of Croce's *Estetica* at the turn of the century was rapid, and much of it but expressed in an exceptionally lucid manner an attitude towards which European reflection on art had been moving for a very long time. An Irishman aspiring to be a Good European, and characteristically contributing an essay on Ibsen to the *Fortnightly Review* while still an undergraduate at the college where Gerard Manley Hopkins, the Jesuit poet, had once taught Greek, James Joyce was set to absorb this continental influence as a sponge to drink in water. The future expatriate who, leading a particularly conventional life with his wife and children, was to toil in Trieste as a Berlitz language-teacher, spend the

war years in exile at Zurich—with an interlude as a bank clerk in Rome—and end up in Paris, all while writing a literature that was to scandalize both hemispheres, had swallowed his artistic theory neat as an undergraduate, and once for all. It needed but patience to work it out, and Joyce had this virtue abundantly.

But in spite of all this, there was much in the theory that is profoundly true. The artist is a kind of priest standing between the world of his experience and the world of his dreams; or, if we may reinterpret this, between the world of his experience as artist and that of his experience as common man. He has twin faculties—a selective and a reproductive one—and to equate these faculties is his *métier*. The domain of art is to be conceived as cone-shaped; poetry is the perfect coincidence of the two faculties, while ‘literature’ is, according to Joyce, no more than a vast, dull space that lies between the apex and the base of the cone, that is, between poetry and the chaos of unremembered writing. But his kingdom of art is no anarchy, for Joyce insists on classicism as integral to all true art. A classical style is described, indeed, as the ‘syllogism of art’. It is this love for the classical, hand in hand with his cosmopolitan tastes and his incurable but repressed nostalgia for Ireland, which gives his work much of its extraordinarily distinctive flavour. A born linguist, he knew the limitations of language, and though he tried as perhaps no one else has ever tried to overcome them, he never forgot them. What he valued in the classical temper was its spatial catholicity; it is a constant state of the artistic mind. The romantic temper, by impatiently throwing the inevitable limitations of sense to the winds, loses its moorings and dissipates itself. Joyce always remained far too much an Irishman to forget the fatally easy fluency of his race. He perceived, however unconsciously, that the vigorous eloquence which was his Irish heritage needed something hard to chew if it were to survive, and his life was in great part a quest for this.

It is in his earlier work that we find Joyce willing to take the trouble of repudiating the puritanical conception of didactic art. Genuine art should no more be didactic than it should be

pornographic; it should be content to be art. To prohibit the artist's course as an artist is as absurd as it would be for a police-magistrate to prohibit a triangle from having three sides. Nothing on this subject, however, is particularly well said in the *Ur-Portrait*, and had been said far better by æstheticians years previously. But one would hopelessly misunderstand Joyce if one were to think of him as an apostle of libertinism, as was D. H. Lawrence, for instance, in the sense that the latter deliberately fought against the contemporary ethical code, which he regarded as an insult to life. Joyce is no more anti-puritan than he is puritan, no more unconventional than conventional. As Sisley Huddleston depicts them, Joyce's birthday parties in his flat on the *rive gauche* show how much he was the artist and how little the literary snob; and only the most intolerable literary snob could have failed to enjoy these evenings to which the guests were invited simply because they were family friends. Far from being acts of literary homage or a Joycian cult, they were rather more like a Yorkshire family party. The guests went not to encircle James Joyce, but to meet Mr. and Mrs. Joyce at a long table on which were piles of cakes and sandwiches, jugs of champagne and Irish whisky. And as befitted such parties, one was pressed to eat more than one wanted, but never asked whether one had even read Joyce at all. They must have been almost the last places in the world at which the race of pretentious, Joyce-worshipping literary faddists would have expected to find him. One of Joyce's greatest secrets was that he never ceased to be wildly shocked by the immoral without being in the least shocked at writing about it with not the slightest vestige of reproof. His artistic theory never lost his most faithful allegiance; but he carried into his art, unwittingly perhaps, something of the conventional standards of morality that had captured his vivid imagination.

But there was an even stronger influence at work: his spiritual Mother, the Roman Church. For while he seemed to delight in ribald blasphemy against her theology, he always reverted to her structure. No apostate was ever more irrevocably captivated by the Church from which the apostasy

took place. This was partly due to his exaltation of the classical temper, but more to the simpler fact that his Catholicism was so embedded in his mind that he could never wholly escape the pattern. I think one of the best introductory remarks one could make to a prospective student of James Joyce is that of Valéry Larbaud, who observes that he is closer to the Jesuit casuists than to the French naturalists. Even so, it is certainly bizarre that Joyce should turn to Saint Thomas for an æsthetic, as he does in *Stephen Hero*, while flouting the theological authority of the great Doctor of the Church. It would be hard to find even the most enthusiastic neo-Thomist so content with the widely discredited, naïve æsthetic of Thomism. Stephen, however, recalling the three things which Thomas said were necessary for beauty (integrity, symmetry, and radiance), boldly rushes into an exposition. When one is confronted by an æsthetic object, one divides the universe into two parts, the object and the void which is not the object; so one recognizes its integrity, which is declared in a sudden synthesis in the faculty which apprehends. Then follows analysis; the mind traverses every cranny of its structure, thus receiving the impression of the symmetry of the object. But it is about the third quality, radiance (*claritas*), that Stephen has most exercised his mind. *Claritas*, Stephen roundly asserts, is *quidditas*. This is Thomist terminology, but little more. It is, however, from the rock of this æsthetic theory that *Ulysses* itself is presumed to have been hewn.

After the synthesis that is followed by analysis, there comes synthesis again. This is the moment which Joyce calls 'epiphany', turning again inevitably to Mother Church. Joyce had no Greek, and it is probable that Oliver Gogarty is right when he suggests that Father Darlington had taught Joyce incidentally, in the Latin class, that 'epiphania' (for instance, 'epiphania Domini') meant 'a showing forth'. At any rate, Joyce defines 'epiphany' as a *manifestation*, which is the usual alternative term in English to describe the liturgical event. We ought to beware of looking for subtle explanations of Joyce's theory and technique, as critics too often have done, lest the simpler and probably true explanation elude us. What is a Joycean 'epiphany', after all, but the equivalent of a

Crocean 'moment of expression'? You see a clock daily; but at last you 'intuit' it. So Joyce:

'Yes,' said Stephen. 'I will pass it time after time, allude to it, refer to it, catch a glimpse of it. It is only an item in the catalogue of Dublin's street furniture. Then all at once I see it and I know at once what it is: epiphany.'

He goes on to compare the process with that of focussing physical vision: the moment the object comes into focus it is 'epiphanized'. It is a question of attaining purity in artistic experience. One recalls Edward Bullough's theory of 'psychical distance'. Joyce was fascinated by his idea of 'epiphanies', which keeps cropping up in various guises throughout his work, so that we even find that when the remarkable company of saints and martyrs, acolytes and mitred abbots, proceeds down Little Britain Street to a firm of 'wholesale grocers, wine and brandy shippers', the mullioned windows of which are censed by priests standing beneath a canopy of gold, it is the introit 'in *Epiphania Domini* which beginneth *Surge, illuminare*' that they sing. Not a few *raconteurs* have become literary camera-men under the influence of Joyce's technique; a literature of the most subtle sophistication and eccentric preciousness has developed round short-story writing; but it is plain that, however masterly and original was this technique, his artistic theory remained always almost incredibly simple.

Nor had Joyce, in spite of the contrast between his conventional manner of life and the audacious unconventionality of his writing, the slightest capacity for the kind of artistic detachment which enables an artist to submerge his own personality in his work. Harry Levin's insight is never more penetrating than when he observes that Joyce lacks the precision in parody which made it possible for Max Beerbohm to draw caricatures which were acutely critical masterpieces quite independent of the cartoonist's personality. We can admire his style, as versatile as it is recognizable, almost without wondering who the superb craftsman was. Consider only Beerbohm's work in 1913: the immaculate and debonair Lord Alexander Thynne, all smooth and black, 'enchancing the Labour Party'; or Masfield contemplating in poetic

ecstasy on the roof of a 'rustic slum' the artistic significance of a 'swear-word' in the alley below; or the 'mild surprise of someone who, revisiting England after long absence,' finds Shaw still standing on his head; or the dons of Magdalen scrupulously avoiding a forlorn new undergraduate, the Prince of Wales, so as 'to incur no imputation of flunkeyism'. They are all of a piece, yet tell us little of the craftsman who has produced them, as it were behind an iron curtain. Joyce, on the other hand, spills himself all over his *pastiches*. When he parodies, he parodies himself; not Dickens or Carlyle or Wardour Street, but Joyce the Dickensian, Joyce playing at Carlylese, Joyce in Wardour Street. His work is always as Miltonic as it is Rabelaisian, and it is very much both; but it is always above all Joycian. There is hardly a phrase in *Ulysses* that does not scream Joyce at you; yet it is Joyce the artist, hardly ever Joyce the man. This is one reason why, of all the errors of judgment ever committed by the censor, surely that which caused the ferocious persecution of Joyce and resulted in the ridiculous litigation that ended with his triumph in the United States Court of Appeals, must be the worst; worse even than the prosecutions of Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* and Baudelaire's *Fleurs du Mal*. A pornographer who wrote anything so sexually disgusting as *Ulysses* would die of starvation if he were not locked up as mad. A blasphemer who did so would be no less pathetically inefficient; there was perhaps more wisdom than may appear in the Papal Index of 1929 that kept all Zola and even some of Kant and Locke on the forbidden list while Joyce had not found his way into it.

By the time he wrote *Ulysses* Joyce had steeped his art in two fast dyes, sex and religion. This is not, of course, a unique arrangement. Sex is at the root of human life, and religion professes to be its fullest flower; it is natural that the artist should find extremes peculiarly interesting. But the manner of Joyce's handling of the antinomy is certainly unique, and it is somehow increased by, if not entirely dependent on, the fact that the Catholic tradition which held him spellbound is one which knows pre-eminently how to express itself. Joyce does not try to shock either the conventional or the pious;

he is too shocked himself by the polarity of sex and religion. He could hardly have failed to have been much influenced, not least during his Zurich period, by the psychoanalytic movement, and there is little doubt that his artistic theory was to some extent, to say the least, affected by the psychoanalytic idea of free association. He is 'yung and easily freudened'. Confessing a debt to Dujardin, he writes a *monologue intérieur*, but one which has been deliberately brought out into the light of consciousness, and seen in the perspective of the conscious. It was a reaction from Ibsen's naturalistic drama. Impressionism had looked at life passively; expressionism, as Hermann Bahr said in 1916, looks at it actively, through the mind's eye; and Joyce never forgets to bring his internal monologue on the glaring stage of conscious mind, however fleeting each glimpse may be. But when all this is said, it remains true that Joyce never radically modified his own far more unsophisticated artistic theory. One will learn no more psychology from *Ulysses* than from many inferior 'psychological' novels, perhaps not even as much. But the key-note of the Joycean theory, the idea of artistic arrest, is invariably manifest in his technique. One by one, with astonishing patience and skill, ideas are arrested in the black darkness of the unconscious, and, held firmly in the craftsman's grasp, brought forth boldly into the light of day, so that we have the feeling that Joyce is almost as much surprised at his catch as we are.

Theoretically, all art is a basis for further mental activity, for instance intellectual or moral reflection, because the artistic experience is that upon which all other experience rests. But Joyce's art does not ordinarily fill this role, for its strength and weakness lie in the fact that it appears but momentarily on the stage of consciousness. Artists are all accustomed to wrest artistic truth from the artificiality of ordinary experience; but Joyce does this facing, as it were, in the opposite direction. He has to create a barrier against the torrential stream of unconscious mind, to impose stasis on kinetic energy, and the result is sometimes jerky, even irritating, because he is trying to produce a still film out of a motion picture, to make the picture dominate the motion. This is, of course, what music

does, and to do the same in letters demands consummate craftsmanship.

There seems to be nothing in Joyce's very primitive artistic theory to suggest anything so technically clever as *Ulysses*. That Joyce was able to accomplish it was due rather to his uncannily acute sense of hearing. His eyesight was, it is well known, extremely defective, and he evidently made good the deficiency by a sense of hearing so vigorous and delicate that he was capable not only of distinguishing but of creating *nuances* that would escape most people. It is surely due to this gift, rather than to any theory, that word-play is so much part of his technique. The pun is proper to only a certain level of mental activity. Rustics are generally insensitive to it, and intellectual people usually find it tiresome; but it is at home in the strongholds of city life; the Parisian finds it amusing (French is a paradise for punsters), and the Cockney enjoys it, as he enjoys rhyming slang, its near cousin. Joyce loves nothing better than linguistic medley, and his pun has often a cosmopolitan character. He spins gaily from one tongue to another as he skims across the waters of human experience, love and obscenity, blessings and blasphemies, what you will. The Church itself, he announces, was founded on a pun, 'thuartpeattrick.' Chamberlain's foreign policy is 'umbroglio'. Joyce can go on like this for hours. His malapropisms expand till his entire work becomes one vast malapropism symbolic of the *malaise* between art and life. Sometimes it is impossible to escape the conclusion that he is too inhumanly clever with words to lay hold on human life; yet is not such failure the failure of our century to relate art to the chaos of the city?

No student of Joyce can have failed to notice how much easier he is when read aloud; indeed, to read him silently is almost like reading a musical score. In the opening paragraph of *Dubliners* he confesses how the sound of certain words has always fascinated him; 'gnomon', 'simony,' and above all, 'paralysis.' He was constantly analysing the bare sounds words made, so that by the time he wrote *Ulysses* he was able to make almost the whole work onomatopœic. Some of the difficulty of his synthetic language (*Ulysses* contains 260,430 words, with a vocabulary of 29,899) disappears as we recognize

his extreme preoccupation with sounds and accustom ourselves to a constant tendency to onomatopœia. 'Enjoy a bath now: clean trough of water, cool enamel, the genile tepid stream.' 'Jingling hoofthuds.' 'He came a step a sinkapace forward on neatsleather creaking and a step backward a sinkapace on the solemn floor.' 'Heartbeats her breath: breath that is life. And all the tiny tiny fernfoils trembled of maidenhair.' But to solve all the 'messes of mottage' we must be on the *qui vive* for a quite incalculably complex combination of devices, especially alliterations, assonances, spoonerisms, rhymes, puns, and other such auditory frolics, but also all linguistic puzzles, anagrams, acrostics, and so forth, and these often with a *double-* or even *triple-entendre* in a Babel of foreign tongues. So we have 'viceking's graab', since Ireland is at once the loot of Albion's viceroy and the grave of old Norsemen; and 'pratschkats at their platschpails', because in Russian *prachka* and *plach* mean 'laundress' and 'weeping' respectively, is a phrase to denote old women by the Liffey, whose 'rivering', 'chittering', 'hitherandthithering' waters are presented to us in many guises. There is, plainly, no end to the possibilities of linguistic fun of this kind, and Joyce certainly never goes out of his way to help the reader. By the time he was at *Finnegans Wake* he had become, it would seem, obsessed with a mania for the cryptic, almost as if it were an end in itself. All this has little to do with his naive artistic theory, and much to do with his innate and freakish genius as a linguistic conjuror.

The extraordinary richness and versatility of Joyce, which has led Pierre Courthion, in his fairly recent book, *Le Visage de Matisse*, to compare him to Picasso, is likewise to be considered to a great extent quite apart from his artistic theory. His plethora of material has more connection with the mischievousness of his temperament, goading him on to outdo the surrealists at their own game, than with his proper art, to which it is more often than not quite incidental. He could be pellucid when he pleased, even in *Pomes Penyeach*:

'The moon's greygolden meshes make
All night a veil,
The shorelamps in the sleeping lake
Laburnum tendrils trail.'

His obscurities may have been sometimes intentional—he was certainly brimming over with fun, which saved him constantly from the spiritual jaundice to which his fastidious disgust at the tragedy of life's antitheses otherwise pointed—but oftener they arise from the fact that he has to take for his material that which is timeless, so that his range must be catholic. Giambattista Vico predicted a new, timeless history, and more recently Croce's historiology has prepared us for literary phenomena of this kind. This timelessness is among the essential features of Joycian theory and technique; he refuses to recognize any fundamental difference between myth and 'historical fact'; he hammers all together just as he welds 'thurifer' to 'crucifix' to give us 'thurifex'. But we must distinguish Joyce, the literary alchemist who never forgot the Rabelaisian dictum, 'mieulx est de ris que de larmes escrire,' from Joyce the artist, who like most artists was no æsthetician, but unlike most artists clung with astonishing tenacity to the shallow though not unwholesome artistic theory he had framed while no more than a big schoolboy rebelling against his Jesuit preceptors.

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PLANT COLLECTING IN SOUTH AFRICA

W. L. CARTER

BOULDERS and masses of rock littered the scene as though tossed in idle play by giant hands, each left to rest where it fell. Impressions sunk deep in the soft sand marked where animals from the bush had passed, seeking water at dawn and dusk. A tick bird fluttered about with wings damaged from a vicious battle with vultures. It had escaped by sheltering in a rock gully too narrow for the larger birds to reach down.

Hereabouts the rock was split into crevices most of which were partly concealed by plants of the curious *Crassula corymbosa*, whose thick fleshy leaves were coloured bright red from the poor living they extracted from the rock waste that partly filled each crevice. Sprays of white flowers, glistening in the brilliant sunlight, were studded against the crimson background, which itself merged almost imperceptibly into the red-brown of the rocks. Stones of all shapes and sizes were heaped into fantastic shapes and formations. Smaller pieces lay in long drifts after the fashion of silt piled by the sweep of a fast-flowing river. Dwarf mosses and lichens half-hid the larger rocks beneath a soft mantle of green relieved by an occasional yellow and an even rarer red. Atop the steep rise stood an immense *Euphorbia* bush; its vertical spurry growths pushed skywards like candles in an old-world chandelier. This huge shrub—one of Nature's freaks and so large it appeared to be a tree—was Africa's representative of our common groundsel, a weed of field and meadow.

Beyond the rocks the road inclined steeply towards woodland fringing a river valley. Gullies channelled out of the roadside by the fury of storms were choked with hundreds of the white spathes of *Richardia ethiopica* thriving in this congenial moisture-laden situation in full sun. Bright green heart-shaped leaves, borne on long stems and thrust through a tangle of

decaying herbage, made a cool setting for the flowers of this so-called arum lily, while tiny stingless bees busied themselves with the rich harvest of pollen from the central golden rods, the actual flowers. Over all hung a sweet, clean fragrance resembling that of the famed *Harrisii* lilies of Bermuda. Farther along, the white arum gave place to a rare buttercup-yellow form whose spathes shone like golden silk in the sun, now reaching towards its zenith.

Down where the way took a sudden turn to the right between the divided portions of an abandoned, rock-hard anthill, the ditches drained into a large watering pool, fed also by a tiny spring little more than a bare though persistent trickle through a cluster of green-coated rocks at the shady end of the water's expanse. A family of ibis solemnly sported about, rarely pausing to probe into the deeper parts of the pool whose bed gleamed brightly with white pebbles, most of which were veined clearly with scarlet-vermilion threads. The black-tipped white feathers, black heads, and scarlet wing patches of these ancient messengers of Thoth contrasted quietly against the miscellany of colours in and about the pool. Small, gaily coloured birds chattered noisily in the shade of low bushes. A wild jasmine, probably bird-borne from some plantation garden many miles away, draped its fragrant white stars over a low sandy bank. The refreshing scent of its countless blossoms persisted beyond the broad shallow recess fronting part of the pool edge marking where birds came to drink.

Cinnabar moths flitted from flower to flower of a form of ragwort, a notoriously invasive weed which only this moth keeps in check. Greenish-black forewings picked out with scarlet, and scarlet hind pairs with deeper markings were on every robust clump of the large golden-yellow heads of bloom. A sandy drift full of rough grit—the sharp fragments resembled bits of opal rock refuse—was partly covered by a colony of *Romulea cruciata*, a member of the iris family. Rather broad, long pointed leaves clustered about short stems, mostly divided at the base and carrying three or more deep pink starry blooms. A few of the flowers were prettily marked with purple. But attractive though they were, the *Romuleas* served as little more than a setting for some magnificent specimens of *Homeria*

elegans and an allied species, whose fleeting blooms apparently died only to reappear in phoenix-like manner. Slender foot-high stems bore widely open red and yellow flowers. Red petals alternated with yellow ones, and each plant seemed to produce only one solitary long leaf. The second form—there were only two plants—had lovely flowers of a most delicate shade of salmon-pink.

By now the sun had nearly attained its midday fullness. The dry heat was stifling as only the South African solitudes seem able to produce, differing much from that in South Morocco and Western Egypt, where the noon heat is merely sheer high temperature. The very air shimmered in waves under a blazing sun beating down from a cloudless sky. The ibis ceased to stir and fell asleep in the deep shadow cast by a giant baobab tree. Only the lazy trickle of spring water, and an occasional high-pitched buzzing from bees winging to and from their home in the trunk of a long-dead tree, broke into the stillness. But overhead, many hundreds of feet above, hovered an ominous black spot. Seemingly, it scarcely moved yet the king vulture was waiting and watching for quick mortality to overtake some animal. Nothing similar was visible against the emptiness of the blue sky, but we knew that others of these winged scourges were quartering the heavens, each keeping to its own allotted area. About the rocks exposed to the full fury of the sun the heat flickered and danced above the deep crevices. Rainbow-hued lizards sunned themselves on rocks hotter than the hand could bear to touch. Against the horizon a range of hills crouched sullenly like outposts of a hostile country. We rested in the shade of the baobab. It was so hot that we longed for a touch of the alpine coldness from the slopes of Ruwenzori far to the north—almost on the Equator—where snow-capped peaks of the rugged rock pile of the Mountains of the Moon shroud their frowning pinnacles in a clinging smother of cloud above the rain-soaked forests far below.

Two hours later, when the slanting shadows from the baobab began to lengthen, we resumed our journey. On the far side of the sandy bank lay a steeply inclined stretch of fine sand mixed with decayed leaves blown from the tree. It was closely overgrown with tall bushy plants of *Erica Chamissonis*,

an African relative of the common ling of British moorlands and hillsides. The spread was a study in carefully restrained shades of pink, and on its fringe were dotted a few fine specimens of *Erica strigosa*, a rarity bearing many umbels of rich pink flowers, all nodding like harebells on an English common in the faint breeze now stirring into life. The heath-covered slope ended in a ravine gouged by rending torrents, so we returned to the rough way and rode along the track formerly trodden by the impis of Tchaka, the Zulu Napoleon of the early nineteenth century.

Clumps of wild apricot bushes gave shade to tiny rock plants, while here and there—spaced on a wide grassy meadow like chessmen on a board—grew orange trees, whose dark evergreen leaves served as an effective foil to the brightly-coloured fruits and sweet citrous-scented white blossoms carried on the trees at the same time. Near one of the wild apricots flourished a splendid plant of *Pelargonium pellatum*. Soft, velvety, strongly aromatic leaves and clusters of light pink flowers made up what resembled a giant geranium or old-world greenhouse pelargonium so beloved of Victorian and Edwardian gardeners, now rarely grown. Only this single plant was to be found although we looked for nearly one hundred yards around the sheltering apricot, but the search was worthwhile, for we discovered a small thriving clump of one of the *Gazanias*, allied to the common daisy of meadows. Its shoots were almost prostrate and intertwined into a loose mat above the very light soil that filled a deep level inlet between two large rocks. Tiny long dark brownish-green leaves turned gleaming silver-grey undersides to the sky, while dozens of large light yellow flowers like outsized daisies studded the small clump. Just beside the *Gazania* was a minute pool no more than four feet across, filling a natural trough in the limestone mass of tumbled rock. On the north side, and in a sparse shade thrown by a tall rock so eroded at the base that it looked topheavy enough to collapse before the lightest breeze, grew several plants of the lovely *Anchusa rufaria*. Fine dark blue flowers were freely produced on a branching plant of elegant habit. The *Anchusas* were plainly at home in the grit and sand near the water, where they could thrust down their roots into cool rock during hot spells. Seed

of this find has grown well in Britain, where the plants look very much like a refined borage.

Near here our track rejoined a metalled road bordered by so many giant baobabs, known locally as the 'cream of tartar' tree, as to resemble a cool inviting avenue. The trees were bearing the curious gourdlike fruits collected by natives for the sake of the acid pulp. Small boys were feasting on these with relish. Baobabs have hollow trunks which form natural stores of water, and, a few weeks later when a definite drought had set in, we saw natives tapping the trunks and drawing off water into buckets. Near to the baobabs flourished some of the *Proteas*, evergreen shrubs peculiar to South Africa. Under glass in Britain they are mere shadows of their true selves in the Southern Hemisphere. There were two species—*P. longiflora* and *P. mellifera*. The former were ten-foot shrubs with fine leaves and many oval heads of creamy-yellow bracts and cream sepals, while the second, a more attractive bush, was somewhat smaller than its companion but far more colourful. Big clusters of gleaming bright pink bracts formed a perfect contrast to the long white blooms they enclosed.

A mile or so further along the road we turned abruptly into a bridle path leading through thick undergrowth. Half an hour later we emerged into an altogether different type of country to that traversed earlier in the day. Rolling savanna-like country interspersed with clumps of trees, grass and plant covered hills and low hummocks of cool green, dotted with citrus groves, showed clearly that the type of plants we might expect to see would differ much from those whose rock homes we had so recently left. Soon we had proof of this, when in the drainage ditch of an orange grove we saw the bright orange flowers of *Clivia miniata*, which revels in ample moisture during its growing season. Flattish stems carried large umbels of the shining blooms of this connection with the *Amaryllis* family. The arum lily was everywhere, and in places its curious roots shaped like large cylinders were being thrown out. The growth was so luxuriant as to block the ditches, thus preventing the flow of water, a prime necessity when orcharding in these hot African areas.

Where the soil was sandy—nearly pure sand, in fact—but.

moist, some of the little *Gladiolus* species were flowering. *G. pulchellus* had thrown up its foot-high stems with several purplish-pink blooms, and where decayed leaves had gradually become mixed with the sand until the blend was almost sandy peat flourished a giant of the family in the shape of *G. papilio*. Clumps of long green swords nearly a yard in height were pierced by tall spires of many-coloured large blossoms. Purple, lavender-pink and yellow blotched flowers hung almost horizontally from the stems. Occasionally, bright scarlet spots among the *Gladioli* presented a welcome break in the monotony of colour. These marked a few small clumps of *G. cardinalis*. Although there were many variations in shades among the first two species—the third was constant among the plants growing in this colony of associates—none appeared to arise from the result of crossing between species. We looked in vain for the most colourful of all South African *Gladioli* in the shape of the extremely rare *G. psittacinus*, but its brilliant hooded orange flowers were not to be found, although we did notice a solitary robust specimen with scented white and brown-blotched flowers revelling in some light soil near an irrigation channel.

In a drier situation, on the side of a squat hummock and between two large bushes resembling giant gorse, clouds of bright butterflies and small bees marked the place of a grand sweep of *Ixias*. Several species grew here with many differing blooms. Mauves and whites were picked out by orange and blacks, bright reds and pale blues contrasted vividly with vermilions and purples, but strangest of all were the weirdly-coloured blooms of *Ixia viridiflora*. Strong stems bore many purple-eyed green flowers tipped with deep blue. There was something definitely malevolent in the appearance of these blooms. One half-expected to see a black mamba glide silently and evilly from beneath the screen of these unusual plants, but only the leap of a small bullfrog on its way to a congenial ditch disturbed the leaves and stems, now partly hidden by the long shadows thrown by a small shrub. This was *Asystasia bella*, and was in full bloom. Not much more than a man's height, its many tiny branches were completely concealed by a wealth of lilac flowers, each a widely open bell, with fine throat markings.

Dark red butterflies with black spotted wings seemed reluctant to tear themselves from the nectar feast.

At length we turned into a wide way between orange trees. It led to the bungalow where we were to stay the night. Already the sun had nearly set and the short African twilight was beginning to throw those curious dusky shadows peculiar to itself. Large white moths began to zoom awkwardly through the air. The bees had gone, and somehow the gay butterflies of an hour before had imperceptibly yielded place to bats zig-zagging in strangely controlled flight. As we rode the last half-mile a silvery-white glow on the far horizon betokened the rising of the moon. But the efforts of night, with its would-be levelling of colour to almost a common dullness, were defeated by the light of the moon, for outside the bungalow gleamed the glorious shining rich red of a rose brought from England. Its fragrance drenched the air for yards around, completely submerging the harder scents and aromas of the native African flowers. On the broad verandah the perfume was even stronger and it seemed reluctant to leave us as we went indoors.

GOOD FREND

By H. D.

PART II*

ROSEMARY

Blest be ye man yt spares thes stones.

I

My fingers knew each syllable,
I sensed the music in the stone,
I knew a rhythm would pass on,
And out of it, if I could stoop
And run my bare palm over it
And touch the letters and the words,
Reading the whole as the blind read.

My fingers knew each syllable,
As a lute-player with a lute,
Whose hand lies waiting on the frame,
Who knows the wires are taut and bright,
Who waits a gesture from a throne,
Or from a balcony, or down,
Among the crowd, from his own lady.

If I could touch the stone, I knew
That virtue would go out of it;
I plotted to efface myself,
To steal un-noticed to the rail,
To kneel and touch if but one letter;
I wondered if the script were worn
And dim and old, or if it shone,
With light and shadow on the stone.

* Part I of this sequence was published in 'Life and Letters' for April, 1947.

GOOD FRIEND

But when I stood before the altar,
The stone had vanished as if under
Azure and green of deep-sea water,
Hyacinth-green and hyacinth-blue;
So once a discus idly thrown,
Had slain the Spring and yet forever,
That death has blossomed, for the power
Of Love transformed Death to a flower.

There were no letters anywhere,
But on each bud, each leaf, each spray,
The words were written that beneath
The laurel, iris, rosemary,
Heartsease and every sort of lily,
Speak through all flowers eternally,
Blest be ye man—that one who knows
His heart glows in the growing rose.

II

And still the bells sway,
My beloved is mine
and I am his;
And still the bells say,

The king's fair daughter
Marries Tunis; O spikenard,
Myrrh and myrtle-spray,
'Twas a sweet marriage.

III

Say Claribel,
Say asphodel,
No flower of death,
But fragrant breath
Of life;

H. D.

See everywhere,
Bright flower-de-luce,
Sword-flower and king-spear
For a truce;
For strife

Is ended,
We ascended
From gloom and fear,
Not after death
But now and here.

IV

Who hold him dear,
Bring woody stem
With leaf and flower,
The sweet herb,
Rosemary,

Known from old time,
In sacred office,
To trim the bride,
To deck the shroud,
Ros maris,

Dew of the sea,
Salt with the sea-spray,
So was his music
Drawn from wood,
Rosemary.

V

But not lute alone
Nor lyre-frame,
Carpenter square and tool
Were made from the tree,
Rosemary;

GOOD FRIEND

Many, many the bees
Hummed in that tree,
Much sweet was plundered,
Stacked and stored,
 Rosemary;

O, what a house he built
To shelter all of us,
O what a plesaunce,
Planed by his rule
 Rosemary.

VI

Time has an end, they say,
Sea-walls are worn away
By wind and the sea-spray,
Not the herb,
 Rosemary.

Queens have died, I am told,
Faded the cloth-of-gold,
No Cæsar half so bold,
As the herb,
 Rosemary.

Rooted within the grave,
Spreading to heaven, save
Us by the grace he gave
To the herb,
 Rosemary.

VII

What rose of memory,
Ros maris,
From what sea of bliss!

H. D.

VIII

Full fathom five
 and under
The sea-surge
 thunder,
Rosalind and Rosaline
With Juliet and Julia
Join hands with Maria,
Mariana and Marina,
Katherine and Katherina
And with many other bright
Spirits;
 Iras,
 Iris,
 Isabel,
Helen, Helena; Helenus
With other princes leads the host
From Arden, Navarre and Illyria,
Venice, Verona and Sicilia;

Knowing these and others well,
Seeing these whom I have loved,
Hearing these—why did I choose
The invisible, voiceless Claribel?

IX

She never had a word to say,
An emblem, a mere marriage token,

Nor even trod a rondelay
Or watched a play with the play

With other ladies—and yet—
I wonder when the time was short,

And he had said farewell to court,
And pondered, fingering the script,

Can this then, really be the last?
If he remembered Claribel.

GOOD FRIEND

X

For still the bells sway,
My beloved is mine
 and I am his,
And still the bells say,

The king's fair daughter
Marries Tunis; O spikena
Myrrh and myrtle-spray,
'Twas a sweet marriage.

XI

I only threw a shadow
On his page,
Yet I was his,
He spoke my name;

He hesitated,
Raised his quill,
Which paused,
Waited a moment,

And then fell
Upon the unblotted line;
I was born,
Claribel.

XII

What's in a name?
Everything, life, death,
Infamy or fame.

It is enough,
I live forever,
He called me fair
In one short line.

H. D.

XIII

I had no voice
To chide the lark at dawn,
Or argue with a Jew,
Be merciful;

I had no wit
To banter with a clown,
Or claim a kingdom
Or denounce a throne;

I had no hand
To snatch a dagger,
Or pluck wild-flowers,
For a crown.

XIV

I stand invisible on the water-stair,
Nor envy Egypt,
Drifting through the lilies;

I may go here or there,
Bargain for bracelets on the bridge in Venice,
Or buy ripe cherries in Verona's market;

Call me most proud who wait,
Even upon the very outskirts of the crowd,
At carnival,
Or stand among the strangers at the gate,
Watching a burial.

XV

And then I wondered . . .
When wandering by Avon's water,
Who best attended him,
Squire and page and jester from Arden,

GOOD FRIEND

Dim shapes or shapes seen and sensed clearly
And laughter heard and song and history,
Unrolled further into the past,
 Unrolled mysteriously
 Into the future;

And then I wondered . . .
What voice it was from Avallon,
Calling that last April,
Farewell, farewell,
But only to pain, regret, disaster,
O friend, farewell
Is only to fear, despair, torture,
Say not farewell,
But hail, Master.

Was it Ariel?
Was it Claribel?

LAURENCE OLIVIER'S RICHARD III

By CHARLES CAUSLEY

Yes, we have journeyed up from the iron vessel
Lying like a queen in the drenched Scottish landscape,
The sullen Clyde oozing into the Turner sunset.
We have booked a bed at the Greenock Y.M.C.A., and fled
To Glasgow and the last-minute six-and-sixpenny upper-box.
The excited programme, no time for a wet in the bar,
The Sickert plush and the white arm adoring the 'cello,
Sweet excitement of strings, and up like a trumpet note flies
 the easy curtain
And Richard of England comes limping into the thick air
Of velvet and drums, crown and ermine and scarlet,
And the wanton flags licking like tongues the brilliant blue
 bowl of the morning.

(CHARLES CAUSLEY is a 29-year-old Cornishman. He served in the Royal Navy as a lower-decker from 1940 to 1946, and is now a school teacher in Cornwall. This poem was written in H.M.S. Glory.)

THE PILGRIMAGE

DIANA GARDNER

THE Paris streets through which the single-decker thrust its way were here and there flecked by pieces of white paper dislodged by the spring wind. It was eleven-fifteen and the journey would take her an hour and a half, with two changes. At the final change—about twelve—she would be out of the city proper and in the ‘environs’. She remembered well the last time she had come: in the year before the war, and on the same kind of fierce, hot day—only a month later, about May. This time many of the houses along the route were in ruins, and the metal advertisements on their side walls were shot with circles of rust: legacy of the wild scramble for the soul of the city in the last days before its liberation.

But she was determined to think as little as possible about the war. She had promised herself an excursion into something which seemed more stable than the present. She had been to the house three times: As a child of eleven—before she had heard of the Letters; in the company of a distinguished old French friend of her grandmother. ‘The child will never forget,’ Mademoiselle Bétu had said. She went there again at twenty-two, when she had considered herself to be in love. By then she had read the Letters, and wanted to see the house where they had been written. She had gone there once more, when she was twenty-six, and no longer in love. The house and the relics and the garden had comforted her.

She was aware, as the bus entered the suburbs, and began bumping on the cobbles, that she had changed a great deal in that time. She was drier; as if the fountain of her life had less force despite the precision with which the water fell. She looked down at her grey skirt, and at the black handbag bought this week in Paris: at a ruinous price—but it had been good to let herself go after six years in a British ministry in London. At

that moment the bus swerved and through the window, open two inches at the top, a wild breath of the spring—at large among the street markets—blew in. Her heart rose.

At twelve-fifteen the streets began to empty. The bus, now only half full, travelled faster towards its destination in the country. At the top of a long hill it set her down by an asbestos café and a garage. As it drove off she looked about her for the house she had come to see.

It stood seven doors down on the other side of the built-up street: wedged between a warehouse and a fish shop. It seemed smaller than she had remembered; despite its four storeys and seventeenth-century entrance. A board, once white, giving times and price of admission was nailed to the oak door. Some of the shutters were broken, and missing tiles had left spots in the steep roof.

She felt cheated; but a moment later the green of the young elms above the roof of the stables brought the scene to life and she could imagine it at the time when the Letters were written: when their writer came by coach from the city to spend a month or so in the country—as it then was—and on arrival at the great house, and while the bustle was still on, would go straight to her room and, turning back her full sleeves, would begin—in that slanting seventeenth century hand—one of the inimitable Letters.

She crossed to the house. A piece of cardboard, askew under the knocker, informed her: *Closed, 12 p.m.—2 p.m.* She looked at the little watch on the lapel of her coat, and impatience swept over her: she had an hour to wait. I had better eat, she thought, and at that moment caught sight of the café on the other side of the street. A lorry had stopped there, and through the window she saw the dark forms of the diners. A table in the window was vacant.

Twenty minutes later a taxi, new by the freshness of its paint, pulled up outside the house, and a tall, carefully dressed man alighted. He was wearing a grey overcoat, and a monocle attached to a silk ribbon. As the car went off he climbed the steps to the door and was about to knock but, like her, he saw the notice, and hesitated.

She felt suddenly annoyed. She realized for the first time

that part of the condition for her pilgrimage was that she should have the house to herself.

He stood vaguely on the top step, wondering what to do. Then he drew back his glove and looked at his watch. He gave one glance at the café before walking slowly off down the street.

2

At two o'clock she knocked at the door of the house. The Curator stood before her as she had remembered him—except that he was a little greyer—smiling at her with his black eyes.

'Good-day, and please enter,' he said, and stepped aside for her.

As she walked into the stone-flagged hall, furnished only with three cases containing relics of the Letter-writer or of the century in which she had lived, and two wooden armchairs, she realized that the man with the monocle had entered behind her.

Her annoyance returned, and she walked quickly away. Out of the corner of her eye she saw him lay his hat and gloves on a chest by the door. He was a head taller than the Curator, and in early middle life.

'It is nine years since I was here,' she heard him say, and was aware of an accent. He, too, was not French.

At that moment she decided that his presence should not spoil her afternoon. It was not worth it. She stepped down the hall toward the great window. Here the air was faintly scented by some spring flowers placed there by the Curator's wife. The other visitor paused to look at some early prints of the house.

She soon forgot him. The garden, filled with sunlight on the other side of the glass, had caught her eye. Although only a little of the original remained, it was brilliant with flowers, and the wall of the warehouse which straddled the end was studded with the yellow buds of a creeper.

It was through this window, she thought, that the original owners came and went to the garden. Then, the place must have been ablaze with life, with whole families living together on different floors.

I must see those rooms, she thought. If I see the upper ones first I may escape the other visitor.

She went swiftly up the wide and uncarpeted staircase. Sunlight filled the first landing from a high window on the south. For a moment she looked back into the hall and saw the grey-clad back of the tall man, bent over a case. His brown hair was brushed carefully over a high and intelligent-looking head. The Curator was explaining the contents of the case.

She went through the first door she came to. She remembered it well. It had been the Letter-writer's drawing-room. The carpets and curtains had gone, which gave it a bare look, but some of the original furniture remained. The fireplace had not been used for years. In winter the house was unheated, except for a small stove in the hall, and the sabres, hung among the tapestry pictures, were rusty.

She crossed to the window, which contained the old glass: flecked and faintly green. At the end of the garden stood the warehouse, and to the right a modern soap factory. Through a half-opened door she saw the movement of a white arm: a man in shirt sleeves at a desk. She thought of the prospect when the house was in its glory: surrounded by forest and below, at the bottom of the long hill—obscured now by roofs—the shining thread of the river among the cornfields.

She thought of herself when last she had been here: unattached, pleased to be earning her living. A very good job it had been—but all jobs were the same she had come to feel. Independence had lost its attraction. And she had never recovered from the need to visit such a place as this.

Her musing was broken by the voices of the visitor and the Curator on the stairs.

She went quickly through a small door into an adjoining room. Here was a spinet and five gilt chairs. It was directly opposite the soap factory and from here she looked straight into the office where the man in shirt sleeves was at work.

From there she went on to the first landing and into another apartment, overlooking the street. The Curator and the visitor had gone into the drawing-room.

This room seemed uncared for and was dark, since it faced north. It must have been a guest room, she decided. Some of

the old curtains remained, making it even more sombre. There were no pictures, and an old four-poster without mattress or hangings was the only furniture. It smelt of dust.

From there she went into another room—a small boudoir—narrow and with high ceilings, and one room nearer, she realized with excitement, the room where the magic Letters had been written. As she crossed the landing again to enter another guest room on the south, she noticed that the door of that room stood open. She began to delay the climax of her visit.

I am behaving like a young girl, she thought, lifting—although it was forbidden to touch—an ivory paper-knife, and turning it over lovingly. This little room was stuffy: the windows had not been opened for years; the shutters seemed fixed in their cases. Suddenly she thought of the house during the war: closed at sundown, and empty except for the Curator and his wife in their small kitchen on the garden side; while the German searchlights roving the sky for British bombers lit up the black windows.

Again she became aware of the voices of the two men coming nearer. She put down the paper-knife and left the room hurriedly. Again they entered a room she had already visited.

She had now reached the last room on the landing before her pilgrimage was to end. It was the powder-closet—now bare—with one small window. No doubt it had been used by the writer of the Letters. It was airless there, as if the sun had burnt everything up. She withdrew quickly and stood, her heart beating fast, at the door of the great bedroom.

The sunlight fell across the carpet and over the blue and gold curtains on the four-poster. This room had been cared for by generations of Curators. It was the only completely furnished room in the museum, and most of it had been used by the lady whose Letters had charmed the world for centuries. So carefully had everything been arranged, that it was as if the lady herself had only lately left and would shortly be back. Even her slippers—small and pointed, with little red heels—lay carelessly on a footstool by the bed.

She stood, holding her breath. Through an open pane in

the big window, and above the rattle of the soap factory, a bird could be heard singing in the garden.

She walked slowly to the table in the window where, overlooking the forest and the cornfields, the Letter-writer had sat. Beside the sheet of notepaper—a fresh piece, tenderly placed by the Curator every week—lay a porcelain inkstand, a pepper sprinkler, and two quills.

She laid her bag and gloves on the ground beside her and placed her hands gently on the back of the chair.

This, she thought, is the end of my journey.

She was so deep in thought that she did not hear the Curator and the visitor enter the room. Neither spoke, and the little Curator had gone to a chest in the corner to look for something. When at last she glanced up she found beside her the stranger with the monocle.

His hands were clasped behind him, and his head was bent while he gazed at the desk. His narrow, intent face was heavily lined. He looked at her slowly, and the monocle fell from his eye.

‘Here she sat,’ he said in English, ‘Believe it or believe it not.’

She said nothing, but his eyes held hers steadily. They were grey and clear.

The little smile at the corners of his mouth made her feel that she had known him once, or if not that, that one day she would know him very well.

THE HOUSE OF TREES

KENNETH HAMMITT

MARCUS stopped his saw in the middle of a stroke, and listened. The front door slammed, and his father's footsteps crossed the hallway above. Marcus gathered his tools together and hurriedly but carefully fitted them into their places within the toolbox. Leaving the lid of the box open so the neatness would be noticed should his father come down to the basement, he started running up the stairs.

Half-way, he stopped. Last week his father had said he would not go to the game with him because he had let the furnace fire die. That had been the Washington-U.C.L.A. game. And a couple of weeks before that when Washington beat Idaho 45 to 6, Marcus had had to go with Lee Holcombe because he had forgotten to put out the garbage. Last year things like letting the furnace die and forgetting the garbage had meant five or ten cents docked from his allowance, but this year his father almost seemed to be looking for reasons why they couldn't go to the games together. Marcus went back to the furnace, emptied a scuttle of coal on to the fire, scattered the spillings with his foot, and ran up the stairs two at a time.

His father was already settled in his chair, reading the evening paper. Marcus sat down on the footstool and coughed lightly. The newspaper rustled in reply.

'The furnace is fixed, Dad,' Marcus said. 'I haven't let it go out all week. Not since before the Washington-U.C.L.A. game.'

His father grunted.

'And I've been putting the garbage out as soon as I get home from school. That way I don't forget. I haven't forgotten the garbage since before we beat Idaho.'

His father turned the page of the newspaper and shook out the wrinkles.

'I've been sweeping the sidewalks three times a week,' Marcus went on. 'I've been doing them since be—'

'I handled one hundred and seventeen deposits at the bank to-day, and I didn't make a single mistake,' his father interrupted sarcastically, and went on reading the paper.

Marcus found a spot on his trousers and picked at it with his fingernail.

'How about going to the game with me next Saturday, Dad? It's a home game, at the Stadium. Washington's playing Stanford.' His voice sounded strange to his own ears, and when he laughed before going on, that sounded even more unnatural to him.

'I'll bet a nickel on Stanford if you want to bet on Washington,' he said. His father had played for Washington, and last year they had bet on all the games—his mother had held the stakes, and they had kidded her each time, saying that she might take the two nickels and run away with the milkman.

His father answered from behind the newspaper. 'We'll see when the time comes. Saturday is a long time off yet.'

'This is Wednesday.'

'So the paper says.'

Marcus bent over and retied his shoelaces. 'It doesn't start until two o'clock, and you don't have to work Saturday afternoons,' he urged.

The newspaper came down. 'For God's sake, Marc! Maybe you know more about my hours than I do! I told you that we would see about the game when the time comes. Now run outside before you talk yourself out of a good thing.' The newspaper rose again, cutting off any further discussion.

Marcus got up and wandered listlessly back down to the basement. He took the saw and the other tools he had been using out of the toolbox, to begin again where he had left off on his model airplane.

But he couldn't revive his interest in the model. He had been rather proud of his work before he had gone upstairs, but now he felt that it didn't look like much of anything. It sure wouldn't pass for an airplane, he told himself, not even in the dark with a big shove. He threw the saw on the bench with the other tools, snatched up the model, and chucked it into the fire. The flames wrapped themselves around it, and Marcus had to squint against the brightness and heat. He sucked his

cheeks together, priming saliva into his mouth, and spat into the fire. It hissed and made a river across the fuselage of his model. Then he kicked the furnace door shut, and went upstairs, not bothering about the ashes which had shaken on to the floor.

He marched stiffly through the living room without looking at his father, went into the kitchen, and straddled the chair near the door. His mother was preparing dinner. He rested his chin on his hands on the back of the chair and watched her. She was absorbed with her own thoughts as she washed the potatoes, and didn't notice him.

Marcus let his feet fall from the rungs of the chair to the floor.

His mother jumped and looked around. 'Oh, I didn't know you were there, Marc. What a start you gave me!' she said, a brightness in her voice which made him decide not to pass his problem on to her. She had been using this voice whenever he was around for the past couple of months, and it made him more uncomfortable than if she had come right out and said what was the matter.

Marcus laced his fingers together and made a steeple out of his forefingers. He wished he knew what was wrong, but whenever he asked, his mother changed the subject. He didn't dare ask his father, although he felt certain that whatever was troubling his mother was his father's fault—that it was in some way connected with the games.

'What's for dinner, Mom? Fish?'

'Salmon. Suit you?'

Neither his mother nor his father cared much for salmon, but she'd been serving it a lot lately, the way they'd been having a lot of Marcus's favourites. There was something about it like a glass of nice cold orange juice trying to disguise a spoonful of castor oil, and Marcus almost wished that they'd have liver, although he could hardly choke it down.

'Suits me,' he said, but she had already turned back to the sink.

'I got a B+ in History to-day,' Marcus said suddenly after a minute's silence.

His mother didn't answer.

'There was only one A in the whole class.'

'What's that, Marc?'

'I was telling you about school to-day. I got a B+ in History, and there was only one A in the class.'

'That's good, Marc, but next time you be the one who gets the A. What else?'

'We didn't get any other grades,' Marcus said. 'But we hid Russell Catey's bike at noon and he couldn't find it after school. He doesn't know we did it because we even pretended to help him hunt for it. He had to walk all of the way home. He still doesn't know—'

His mother turned, her eyes flashing. Marcus thought he had never seen her so angry. It was as though everything she had been holding within herself was on the verge of bursting out.

'You did *what!*' she cried.

Marcus started to answer, to offer an excuse which he himself did not understand, but left his words hanging unsaid. How could he say that he had done it because his father wouldn't go to the games with him?—it didn't make sense. He squirmed on his chair, waiting for his mother to speak.

'I've never been so ashamed, Marcus!' she said, and abruptly turned back to the sink. 'Being deliberately cruel is bad enough, but to pretend you were helping him . . .' Marcus could see that she was fighting back the tears.

'But—' he began, and stopped. He didn't know how to say what he felt, not even to his mother.

'What ever made you do such a thing, Marcus?'

Marcus wound his feet around the chair legs. 'I—I don't know.'

His mother picked up a potato and began to snap the bad spots out with the tip of her paring knife.

'Who suggested hiding Russell's bike?' Her voice was quieter now.

'I guess I did,' Marcus murmured, tracing the pattern on the linoleum with his eye.

His mother didn't speak for what seemed to Marcus an awfully long time.

'Why, Marc? Why did you want to be mean to Russell?' she finally asked him.

Marcus didn't answer. His mother came over to him, and pushed the hair back from his face.

'Did you think that—that by hurting Russell you could repay someone else for hurting you?'

Marcus looked at her in surprise, and quickly turned away again.

'What kind of reasoning is that, Marc?'

'Not very good, I guess,' he replied, his eyes on the floor.

His mother lifted his chin, and looked down at him squarely.

'Did it make you feel any better after you'd done it, Marc?'

He shook his head.

'Don't you see how topsy-turvy your thinking was?'

Marcus didn't answer.

'Don't you, Marc?'

'Yes,' he whispered.

His mother turned back to the sink. 'Don't you think you'd better go and get Russell's bike and take it back to him?'

'I guess so,' he replied. If he got to school a little early to-morrow he could slip Catey's bike into the rack and tell everybody that the janitor must have found it.

'Marc!'

'You mean now? Right now, before dinner?'

'I mean this instant!' Her voice was angry again, and Marcus slid from his chair and went out the back door. He walked around the house so he wouldn't be tempted to look back and see his mother's face in the kitchen window.

'Darn her, anyway,' he said aloud, and kicked a stone from the sidewalk. But his anger wasn't with his mother, it was towards himself for having told her about Catey's bike. Now she might not help him get his father to take him to next Saturday's game.

It wasn't as though he'd done something that really hurt Catey. It'd probably made Catey feel good to have them help him hunt for the bike. He hadn't acted like he suspected them of playing a trick on him. No one ever knew just what Catey was thinking, though—not even Catey himself from any outward signs. But Marcus sure would have said something if he'd been Catey and thought they'd ditched the bike as a joke. But

Catey was different. Catey was *K-K-K-Katy, Beautiful Katy*. He whistled the tune under his breath.

He found the bike behind the shrubbery over by the annexe where they had hidden it, and wheeled it out into the street. Then he swung his leg over the bar and started slowly down Maple Avenue. It was a handed-down bike, and the sprocket slipped.

At Seventeenth Street Marcus turned and rode until he felt sure he must be near Catey's house. There was a service station on the corner of Rainier Avenue. Marcus turned into the driveway and stopped in front of the open double doors.

'Can you tell me where Russell Catey lives?'

The man looked up from the tyre he was fixing. 'You the young fellow that borrowed Russ's bike? Said he lent it to somebody when he came by this afternoon. Thought it was funny he was walkin'.'

Marcus's face reddened. So Catey had known all along what had happened.

'Wanted to take your girl ridin', and only had one bike, that it? Or is that sunburn?' the man went on. He put his hands on his knees and heaved himself up as though he had been crouched over the tyre for a long time and was glad of the interruption.

'Yes sir, I bet that's just what happened,' he said slyly. 'Asked your best girl to go ridin' in the park, and only had one bike. You should've made her ride on the handlebars.' He winked broadly. 'Lot cosier that way.'

'I was just bringing it back,' Marcus mumbled.

'Yep, I'll bet a sockeyed salmon that's what happened,' the man said, and walked over to Marcus. 'See that kinda old-fashioned house, the second one from the corner?' he asked, pointing.

Marcus nodded.

'Well, that's it. That's where Russ lives.'

'Thanks,' Marcus said, and started down the driveway.

'Don't forget what I told you about them handlebars!' the man called after him.

Marcus stood the bike against the porch where Catey would find it in the morning, and started away. Then he stopped,

turned, and went up to the door and knocked. He heard padded running footsteps within the house. The door opened, letting out a stream of light across the wooden porch. A little girl's head appeared from behind the door.

'Is Catey home?' Marcus asked.

'My mother and daddy have gone next door,' she replied, and started to shut the door. Marcus fought down a desire to leave it at that.

'I mean Russell. Is he home?' he asked.

The stream of light widened again as the child, both hands on the knob, backed away. Marcus hesitated a moment, and then went in. Catey sat at the dining room table, books and papers spread out in front of him.

'Hiya, Catey.'

Catey looked up, squinting through his thick, horn-rimmed glasses into the dimly lighted living room. The glasses clung to his large ears and boney nose like Aunt Vivvie's kitten to the top branches of the quince tree in her back yard, Marcus thought. But then nothing about Catey seemed to fit. His teeth looked too big for the rest of his face, and stuck out. His stockings were always sliding down his skinny legs until they hung in rolls around his ankles. His trousers were bunched around his waist as though they were held up by a draw-string, and his neck poked out of his collar like a willow twig stripped of its bark.

'It's Marc.'

Catey's mouth opened, but he didn't say anything. Marcus walked across to the archway joining the two rooms.

'I brought your bike. It wasn't lost. We ditched it in the shrubbery for a joke,' he blurted out.

His mouth still open, Catey looked down at Marcus's feet. Then he swallowed. 'That's all right,' he said, and turned back to the papers on the table.

Marcus stood uneasily in the shadows for a minute, watching.

'Fractions?'

Catey nodded.

'Compound?' Marcus asked.

Catey looked confused.

'Or simple?'

'I'm just starting,' Catey said. Marcus moved over to the table. The coarse muddy paper was covered with scrawled, uneven figures. Marcus had finished compound fractions, and at a glance he saw that most of Catey's simple problems were wrong.

'You're not doing those right.'

Catey bent still further over the table and peered at the figures.

'Look, I'll show you. All you've got to remember is that when you multiply fractions you're really dividing them. You can see that, can't you?' Marcus sat down beside Catey and reworked the first problem. He explained each correction as carefully as he could, but he could see that more often than not Catey hadn't the faintest idea of what he was talking about. Then he pushed back his chair and stood up.

'Well, I'd better be going,' he said. 'So long, Catey.'

'So long, Marc.'

Marcus ran down the steps and started back the way he had come. But at the corner, when he saw the man still bending over his tyre in the floodlit service station, Marcus turned abruptly and went down another street.

Friday morning when his father came down for breakfast, Marcus was waiting in the kitchen.

'Who do you think is going to win to-morrow, Dad?' he asked.

His father grunted a good-morning to Marcus's mother. 'What? Who's going to win what?'

'The game. Washington and Stanford. I told you about it Wednesday, don't you remember? You were in the living room, and you said that you'd see when the time came. It's to-morrow afternoon.'

His father glanced at him, and looked away quickly. 'Didn't even know they were playing.'

Marcus's mother turned to them from the stove. 'Why don't you and Marcus go together?' she said, and looked anxiously from one to the other. 'I'll hold the stakes,' she added, and smiled at Marcus.

His father scowled, and sat down at the table. Marcus went to the sink, rinsed a clean glass several times, and looked out of the window as he drank. Then he turned to his father again.

'Aren't you going, Dad?'

His father didn't look up from the table. 'Maybe next week. Can't make it this time,' he replied.

His mother turned back to the stove and began to rub the already spotless enamel. Marcus put down his glass.

'But last time you said we'd go to the next one. And this is the next one.'

His father didn't answer, and Marcus went on. 'You said then that you'd go if I didn't forget any of my jobs this week. And I haven't. I haven't forgotten one.' He turned to his mother.

'Have I, mother?'

'It looks like your father is too busy to go to the game with you, Marc,' she replied, looking at his father.

'But he promised!'

His father put down his coffee cup with a clatter. 'Maybe you'd like me to quit my job just so I could go to the game with you.'

'It's on a Saturday afternoon, and you don't have to—'

His father pushed himself away from his unfinished breakfast, and went out, slamming the door behind him. Marcus turned to his mother.

'But he *did* promise, and he doesn't have to work on Saturday afternoons!'

His mother came over and put her arm around his shoulder.

'What about Russell, Marc? Why don't you go with him?'

'Catey? He doesn't know anything about football.'

'Why don't you ask him? I know he'd like to go with you.'

Marcus looked up into his mother's face. 'If I go with Catey this week do you think Dad would go with me to the next one?' As soon as he said it Marcus knew it was wrong.

His mother took her arm from his shoulder. 'You shouldn't have to have a reason for being nice to Catey, Marc.'

Marcus did not reply, and there was a minute's silence before his mother spoke.

'Now run along to school before you're late.' She kissed him absently, and he ran out the back door.

As he rode to school he wondered if his mother would hold what he had said against him when the time came to talk his father into going to the next game.

It wasn't until school was out that Marcus found Catey. They were taking their bikes from the rack, and just as Marcus was going to ask Catey to go to the game, Lee Holcombe came running up.

'Going to the game to-morrow, Marc?'

'Catey and I are going. You can come with us if you want to,' Marcus said.

Catey looked at Marcus in surprise, and Lee searched Marcus's face for a clue to this new joke on Catey.

'You—you mean the big game? At the s—stadium?' Catey asked eagerly.

Marcus shoved his bicycle lock into its holder. 'What's the matter? Can't you go?'

Catey stared at Marcus, his expression shifting between joy and disbelief. Marcus turned to Lee.

'Well, do you want to come with us?'

Lee hesitated, still hoping it might be a joke.

'Well?' Marcus repeated.

'I don't know. Maybe I'll call you up to-night,' Lee answered, and walked away. Marcus knew that Lee was going to try to find somebody else to go with him, but he didn't care. Catey wasn't such a bad kid. He got on his bike and balanced until Catey was ready.

Marcus felt Catey watching him out of the corner of his eye, but they rode in silence until they were inside the University campus. Then Catey suddenly stopped as though he had reached a decision and wanted to act before he might be tempted to change his mind.

'I'll show you my secret house.'

Catey said this so solemnly and abruptly that Marcus wanted to laugh, but he could see that it was important to Catey. He drew up beside him.

'I've never shown it to anybody before,' Catey went on, and started walking rapidly across the campus, glancing anxiously

back over his shoulder, as if he were not sure Marcus would follow.

Marcus stood his bike next to Catey's and went after him. They walked along the footpath past Captain Cook's statue, turned toward the Memorial Building, and then cut across the grass toward a heavily planted, out-of-the-way corner near the Women's Gymnasium. When they reached it Catey dropped to his hands and knees and crawled into a clump of evergreens.

Inside the outer rim of trees was a hollow, as though the core had been plucked out of the clump. The ground was covered with hard-packed, sweetly sharp-smelling needles, smooth and slippery and clean under their feet. The branches came together to weave a roof, and they could stand if they stooped a little. The small shrubs surrounding the clump of trees hid them from anyone going past, but Marcus and Catey could see the students hurrying by from their afternoon classes.

'This is great, Catey. No fooling,' Marcus said, and stretched out on the floor of needles.

'I come here a lot,' Catey said.

Marcus picked up a handful of needles and let them run through his spread fingers.

'You can come here, too,' Catey went on. 'Anytime you want to. I don't mind.'

Marcus picked up another handful of needles and let them run through his fingers more slowly. Being nice to Catey was all right, but if it meant he was going to have him hanging around his neck all the time . . .

'And you can bring anybody you want to.'

Marcus dropped the rest of the needles, and stood up. 'Swell, Catey. Not to-morrow though we're going to the game then, but sometime.'

Catey scrambled to his feet. 'You mean we're really going?'

'What's the matter? Can't you go?'

'Sure. But I thought—'

Marcus gave him a shove. 'See you at the gate about one o'clock.'

The stadium was filling rapidly when Marcus and Catey

arrived the next afternoon. People kept coming through the concrete tunnels in endless streams. The boys moved several times, until they felt they had the best available seats in the section reserved for the grade school students. Catey gaped at the crowd, at the shouting candy butchers in their red and white striped uniforms, and at the players warming up on the field. Marcus knew that Catey had never been to a game before, not even one of the high school games, and he was enjoying the chance to show off his knowledge of football.

'See those guys in the blue shirts?' Marcus asked. 'We're for them. They're the Huskies. That's what they call Washington, Huskies. The ones in the red shirts are Stanford. They're the Indians. We want them to lose.'

Catey nodded solemnly.

'They'll begin to play in a little while,' Marcus said, and Catey looked at him as though to ask what they were doing now if they weren't playing.

'They're just warming up now,' Marcus explained. 'Pretty soon they'll all go back inside where the coach talks to them, and then they'll come out and start. They always do it that way.'

It was like that all through the first half of the game: Marcus explaining, Catey nodding, his face showing that although he didn't understand most of the rules he was having the time of his life.

At the half they ran down on to the field and dashed around the edge until they came to the section of higher-priced seats.

'You can always find good seats at the half,' Marcus said, and led the way up to two empty places. For a minute they stood looking up at the row after row of people filling the great stadium.

It was then that Marcus saw his father.

'Dad!' he shouted. 'Hey, Da—'

His father, Marcus suddenly realized, was with the girl beside him. He had his arm through hers, and he was laughing and leaning close to her. Marcus stared at them for a moment, dumbfounded. Then he turned and pushed his way back past the robe-covered knees, and dashed up the concrete stairs.

At the exit he stopped and looked back. His father hadn't

seen him. He was still laughing with the girl. But Catey was stumbling up the steps after him, awkward in his haste, looking back longingly as the teams came out on to the field for the second half of the game, but following Marcus as fast as he could. Marcus fled down the tunnel and out of the stadium.

A minute later he was at the fence where he and Catey had left their bikes. The bikes had fallen while they were at the game, and Catey's was on top. Marcus flung it to one side, and picked up his own. He knew that Catey would wait for him in the secret house. But Catey could wait in his old clump of trees until next summer for all he cared.

By the time he reached home the tears were flowing freely. He burst into the house, shouting for his mother.

'I'm here, Marc. What is it? What's the matter?'

Marcus followed her voice into the living room. His mother had been writing letters at her desk, but now she was walking towards the door to meet him. Sobbing, he threw himself into her arms.

'Dad was at the game. He didn't have to work at all! He was there with somebody else, and he told me he wasn't going to go!'

'Perhaps—perhaps he found he could get away at the last minute, and there wasn't time to get you,' his mother said, but her tone showed that she knew this wasn't true.

'I'll bet he's been taking her to all the games. I bet he's gone to every one this year!' Marcus cried.

His mother held him tightly in her arms without answering.

Still holding him, she said at last, 'Marc, we'll go to Tacoma and visit your Aunt Vivvie and Roy. You and Roy can build your model airplanes, and we can have picnics at Point Defiance—'

Marcus turned, still sobbing, and ran upstairs. He threw himself on to his bed and buried his head in his pillow. But soon the tears stopped coming, and he became aware of the silence in the room. He rolled over, and sat on the edge of the bed.

Marcus began to see why his mother had been so upset for the past few months, why his father had been hunting for excuses not to go to the games. It was like the day when the

hands of the clock first began to make sense. He saw that his mother had known all along and had been trying to shield him from the truth. A tenderness for her filled him. He wanted to protect her.

He got up and took his canvas bag from the closet and started to fill it with his things from the chest of drawers. He realized that he didn't ever want to go to the games with his father again, that he didn't care if his father never came down to the basement any more to see what he was building.

While he was emptying the second drawer he remembered Catey. Leaving the bag on the floor, he went downstairs. His mother was at her desk, but instead of writing letters, she was just sitting there. He put his hand on her shoulder.

'I'm going out and say good-bye to someone, Mom. Then I'll come back and finish packing. All right?'

His mother put her hand over his, and smiled back at him. 'All right, Marc.'

Marcus went out, closing the door softly behind him. He hoped that Russ would still be waiting for him in the house of trees.

(KENNETH HAMMIT was born in the State of Washington and began writing in the Army as a correspondent for the Public Relations Office. He edited a financial journal in New York for a year after demobilization, and then came to England last Autumn. 'The House of Trees' is his first short story to be published in this country.)

THE THEATRE

THE ALCHEMIST. BEN JONSON. Old Vic Theatre Company.
New Theatre, London.

OTHELLO. WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE. Jack Hawkins, Fay
Compton, etc. Piccadilly Theatre, London.

KING RICHARD II. WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE. Old Vic
Theatre Company. New Theatre, London.

AFTER Shakespeare, Ben Jonson; The Marlowe Society did *Bartholomew Fair* and in the Midlands it was possible to see *The Silent Woman*. Two of his plays have been running concurrently in London. It was also possible to compare two West End productions of *Othello*. This is one of the advantages of the repertory system. One of its disadvantages is that the play one is particularly anxious to see never seems to be on when one is free. For this reason I missed the Wolfit *Volpone*. But tenacity took me to *The Alchemist*, with the result that I was happily taken out of myself by a racy performance of a rich and boisterous comedy.

John Burrell's production ran the play at a speed which avoided gabbling on the one hand and sagging on the other, and the actors were in holiday mood. It is inevitable that a stock company be limited in some of its casting capabilities, but in the main, individual performances blended to a good whole, Ralph Richardson bearing the burden as Face, but Nicholas Hannen (Sir Epicure), Michael Raghan (Tribulation Wholesome), Peter Copley (Ananias), and above all, Alec Guinness (Abel Druggier) contributing much delight. The décor, showing Lovewit's house set in its garden at Blackfriars, was ingenious; for interior scenes, the front of the house was raised, showing hall, stairs, and room, and this allowed for an engaging naturalness in the comings and goings of personages. On the other hand, this Jacobean comedy was dressed in the costumes of 1710 and for that I can see no reason. The programme stated that 'the play depicts life in 1610, but we have set it a century later, since its comment on life can apply

to any period, not excluding our own'. That, however, is no reason for setting it in the early eighteenth century. There are few periods less akin than the reigns of Queen Elizabeth or King James and Queen Anne. Indeed, one could more easily dress an eighteenth-century play in clothes of to-day, for the manners and material problems of the two periods are nearer. The seventeenth century carries on from the sixteenth, but the eighteenth looks forward to the nineteenth and twentieth. In 1710, to take one instance, whether one were Whig or Tory mattered most, not whether one held the old religion or the new. Puritans were no longer a matter of urgency, and to see Jonson's rogue in the red coat of a Congreve or Farquhar character is not to stress similarity but to confuse audiences. It is, further, to display either wilful arrogance or unseemly ignorance of all that happened, between the beginning and close of the seventeenth century, to mark the end of one England and the beginning of another.

We have had too much of this tampering with the periods of plays in recent revivals. There should be only one rule—to produce them either in the costumes of their original performance or in those of our own day. To pick on some in-between era neither atones for the remoteness of period dress and properties on the one hand nor gives verisimilitude to what were once topical allusions on the other. Early eighteenth century is the period of Congreve and Farquhar, and Dryden, and to catapult Ben Jonson into that is not to bring him forward but merely to cause a congestion in the chronology of centuries.

The production of *Othello* at the Piccadilly played no such tricks. It was workmanlike, without being striking. Its chief virtue was that it allowed the play an unimpeded performance. The *Othello* of Jack Hawkins had strength, dignity, pathos; everything perhaps except magic. It was, in short, a workmanlike performance which did not entirely fill the stage, because *Othello* would not have been what he was had he been only workmanlike. In the 'Put up your swords' there was not sufficient authority for a man who was, after all, a general, and this authority Shakespeare did express by the magic of the words he gave the Moor. Jack Hawkins uttered them too

matter-of-factly. Again, in his greeting of Desdemona at Cyprus there was insufficient hint of the underlying hysteria which alone can account for the exuberance of the fear which is the very cause of his relief at her arrival. This is not to say that this Othello was not moving. His scenes with an excellent Desdemona were the most touching interpretation of these I have seen, and the simplicity he stressed in the character did make credible the extent of his reliance on Iago.

This latter was given an exceedingly vulgar performance. Anthony Quayle, stressing social inferiority, played him as a bluff hearty, a *faux bonhomme*, which would have been an interesting interpretation had he not made the mistake of playing a go-getter in a go-getting way. This Iago, one felt, was seeking preferment with the audience, and that very nearly threw the play off its balance. *Othello* is the tragedy of one man—Othello. Shakespeare is careful about this in his title. It is not Othello and Desdemona, as it is Antony and Cleopatra or Romeo and Juliet—it is Othello alone. Fay Compton recognized this. In what is for her the comparatively small role of Emilia she brought out every nuance of the part without for one moment stepping beyond the limits of its design. She contributed to the whole, instead of using that to intensify one part, her own. In this, she was not only an actress but an artist. Her reward was that the death scene of Emilia and her final speeches to Othello had their rightful importance, an importance which is often slurred over at the end.

Some other of the minor roles were inadequately played, but the production as a whole, without reaching great heights or revealing new riches, did allow for a clear straightforward viewing of the play, a play on one theme and one only; married love. Nothing else is allowed to sidetrack for an instant; in no other play, I think, is Shakespeare so single-minded—and no other dramatist, I am sure, could have dwelt so long on such a theme to leave us at the end with so strong a sense of the purity of his conception. The great virtue of this *Othello* was that it allowed nothing to stand in the way of that.

As to the Old Vic's handling of *King Richard II* at the New, opinion can well be divided, but all agree, I think, that their

conception of a suitable décor was disastrous. We know that shortages of timber and so on make scene-designing and construction difficult, but surely nothing can excuse a setting which, consisting of a few ill-disposed pillars on an else bare stage, forces the actors to bob and dart among them like goldfish in the artificial coral of a tank? I was reminded by those pillars of the skeleton of a chicken, of Nobile's hangar at Spitsbergen, of a builder's yard, of goal posts and spillikens, and of a mannequin platform at some industrial exhibition . . . but never for one moment of Richard's England. Colour and lighting could have given us this, and exercise of imagination would have given us colour and lighting. What we were given was what there is too much of in England to-day—the pretentiousness of complacent poverty.

Perhaps inevitably taking their colour from this bare-bones setting, the performances in general seemed to me more those of a full-dress reading than of a finished representation. Alec Guinness's King Richard was all that I had expected, but somehow no more; and this is strange in any performance by Mr. Guinness, for he usually contrives to outdo our imagination of him in any role, by some flash of insight, some added perception of beauty, as in his Fool, and his Abel Drugger. It may be that one cannot follow a Fool and an Abel Drugger with a full-length Richard, but I think the production as a whole was to blame. It lacked inspiration. One cannot expect the Old Vic to achieve a triumph each time, and as far as I am concerned the high-light was reached in *Richard III*. Since that season, which gave us also *Peer Gynt* and *Arms and The Man*, a certain verve seems to have gone out of the proceedings—and too much verve, if I may say so, has entered into the audience, which is apt to acclaim with the fervour of film-fans rather than to distinguish with the discipline of discerners. Performances at the New Theatre have in consequence taken on something of the flavour associated with sessions at Gilbert and Sullivan, and I cannot think this a good thing.

Mr. Guinness's Richard is a very good thing; there can be no doubt of that, and there is no reason to expect 'very good' to equate with 'superb'. I disagree with those who suggested that he did not speak the verse musically. He spoke it as only

he can—and, be it noted, remembering that he was a king. I should like everyone to remark this actor's handling of his 'r'-s; he wins our hearts by the beautiful manner with which he approaches the English language. He did not treat Richard as a performance on a flute, for this was no solo performance—not even of Richard. Indeed the slight dissatisfaction, the feeling of unresolved loose ends which one has to admit was the final impression of this performance, comes, I think, from his very examination of the many facets of Richard. At times, these facets warred; that is indeed the tragedy. Mr. Guinness gives us this—but in terms of acting, so that he is petulant when our reading of the verse has expected pathos, and intellectual when we had imagined Richard given over to the emotion of introspection, rather than to the reasoning—and then suddenly, having possibly disappointed us in his treatment of one of the 'big' speeches, Mr. Guinness will shoot such sadness through a minor quip that we must orientate again. The others vary between the good and the bad; the bad can be left in silence, saving breath for the others—Nicholas Hannen, a good Northumberland, Lewis Casson, an excellent York, and Harry Andrews, a tolerable Bolingbroke (no one who plays Bolingbroke well can make him more than tolerable). Ralph Richardson seemed to be taking trouble, as John of Gaunt, to disguise his mannerisms, but appeared to have taken insufficient trouble to learn his lines; a further indication that the Old Vic is over-worked. I must also put on record that the booking staff at the New continue to be overworked; on both recent, as on previous, visits there have been mistakes over seating near, round, and across me. I mention this merely that readers may know my visits were in no way more privileged than theirs, for such muddles are by now an accepted part of pilgrimage to that theatre.

Repeated visits to *The White Devil* confirm my enthusiasm at the first. It is always interesting to see a play at different stages of its run. I found on my last resort to the Duchess certain things better, certain things worse. The 'line' of the more practised actors was better held; Robert Helpmann still threw away some of the play's most important verse whilst he walked, but in general was stronger. Margaret Rawlings

seemed also to have gained so much as to be able to play the trial scene for what it is worth, instead of reserving herself for later scenes, as I felt, perhaps wrongly, she did the first week or two. She seemed to me to have shed one or two modern mannerisms and to be much more 'in' the part. On the other hand, the Brachiano, whom I had thought promising, by the end of May was playing not his own role so much as variations on imitation of other actors: slovenly, selfish, and often inaudible. The Zanche, too, instead of gaining by experience, seemed to have become 'lighter'. The Cardinal, as ever, gave a major performance—and was not present at the final curtain. The setting was once again pleasure to the eye, and to my non-practised mind a model for easy production of almost any play of this period. Storm-effects, on the other hand, seemed to have increased unnecessarily, drowning some of the verse, which I could not help feeling their artificial bogey-bogey effects did nothing to replace. If this is the effect of popularity, I regret it. And much as I rejoice in the fact I first saw this in March and could still see it at the end of May, we must keep an eye on it . . . as we must keep an eye on the Old Vic transposing plays out of their right settings, even though they may wish to make clear to their audiences that a play by Shakespeare (Elizabethan—'you know, tights and Medici collars') is not the same as one by Jonson. We shall have *The Cherry Orchard* set in the Forest of Arden next, and that will get no one anywhere—except possibly the producer to Stratford.

I have been hard in my strictures on these productions, and I shall be. For two reasons. These are among the best plays in the world. They contain the finest expression, in dramatic form, of man's hopes, beliefs, aspirations, and experience. They are outside politics, which is the new religion; they belong to an older and more lasting to which politics is but a servant—and like most, has given notice. The religion is Life. Simply that. Sophocles, Michelangelo, Aken-hatn are others of its spokesmen. Sophocles has recently been played to a large public; Shakespeare, who used to be 'death to the box-office', is now as popular as Verdi. I am old enough to have seen Ellen Terry, Forbes Robertson, Benson; that also means I grew up in an era which held *Lear* to be unactable. It was, I shall

always maintain, a Marlowe production which scotched that shoddy thought. To-day, following hard on Olivier's, we have the Bristol Old Vic giving a further *Lear* to us in London

If we are going to maintain and improve on this happy state of things (a further sign of which is a *Much Ado* at Croydon) we must remember why these plays were once held unactable; they were badly acted. Shakespeare never ran; why bother? Occasionally, puzzled by this fact which ran counter to his reputation, a manager, usually an actor-manager, would put on a play in the spirit of his day—different ending, in Garrick's; more trappings, in Tree's. None of them thought much about the spirit in which they were written—by an actor. Even during this war we were offered a Lady Macbeth who contrived to snore whilst she delivered her sleep-walking speeches.

The tradition of the unactability of Shakespeare and his contemporaries is long. It stands to reason that days when even piano-legs had to wear frills were hardly those in which Rosalind could be happy in hose. The words used by and to women in Elizabethan plays were 'rude'. People had conveniently forgotten they were not originally used to women, only to boys representing, not women, but dramatic aspects of them. To yell 'Whore' to a representation of a White Devil is somewhat different from yelling it at someone who, however forcefully impersonal an actress she is, still remains or can't help reminding us she is a woman.

It is only lately, only with that happy combination of the new young audience and the new Old Vic, that the great plays of our national heritage have been gone at, in our time, may I say with devotion but no undue decorum? *Richard III*, *Love for Love*—these were the turning points. I do not forget the light kept going by Gielgud's *Romeo and Juliet*, Alec Guinness's *Hamlet*. But lights which start as a torch have a habit of becoming merely electric—all right till the battery gives out. I think the Old Vic is heading for that same complacency which caused visits to the old original company to be like those later to Stratford or Regent's Park; almost a reason for not wishing to see Shakespeare acted.

The torch has been most notably recharged by the vigour of the company which gave us *The White Devil* (I would also

strike any number of blows for the Coghill-Gielgud production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* which, unlike Mr. Gielgud's *Duchess of Malfi*, had the grace and daring to live). Both *The White Devil* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* were approached as new plays. This is different from merely 'according' them a new production. The tendency to 'cash in' is no less strong in the theatre than in other walks of life. The danger is that because a few good spirits surprised and satisfied us with some good productions, the waiting harpies, unrehearsed in all but insincerity, may swim in and dam the very stream that gives them life.

If we have many more instances of camouflage nets doing duty for scenery; of an audience holding its breath while a prompter hisses the most famous key-phrase in English; of an actor using his role as if it were a line of black-market goods others hadn't been 'smart' enough to get in on; of plays being wantonly cut; of designers let loose on plays, the restricted dyes and colours of whose period they ignore; of casualness and competence replacing energy and exasperation—then, well then, we, actors and audience alike, are going to kill the little enough we have to live by.

And the theatre will reserve its revivals for *Ratigan*, its lavishness for *Lonsdale*, and the new young bourgeoisie be left to contemplate only either *Cocteau* or *Cavalcade*.

Luckily, there's a slump. That often means experiment. Otway leaps to mind—three years ago, John Gielgud was too busy to contemplate *Venice Preserv'd*. If Marlowe's allowed at Stratford, and Jonson elsewhere, perhaps this most popular of all tragedies since *Hamlet* could be given a glimpse? Massinger, Ford, Beaumont, and Fletcher, Shakespeare and Fletcher, Chapman, and the myriad of plays which have the great, the almost final merit, of the voices of the players for whom they were written being still audible—who can fail to differentiate, for instance, between the roles written for Nell Gwyn and Mrs. Bracegirdle?

H. K. FISHER

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

FLOWERS OF THE WOODS. E. J. SALISBURY. Illustrated.
King Penguin Books. 2s.

BRITISH HERBS AND VEGETABLES. GEORGE M.
TAYLOR. 'Britain in Pictures' Series. Collins. 5s.

SUCH charm as these books possess resides largely in the illustrations. Of these, those in the King Penguin book are by far the better produced. They consist of twenty-four coloured plates from William Curtis's *Flora Londniensis* (1777-91). Professor Salisbury, after a brief introductory history of this work, traces the habits of our woodland flowers, stressing the effect of light and, conversely, of shade on their cycle of growth. He is, as would be expected of the Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew, illuminating at almost every turn; but this illumination is sadly shrouded in a style for which colourless seems altogether too vivid a word, and it is disconcerting to read such jargon as 'functional efficiency', 'shade problem', and 'economy in pollen production' in a text treating of plants, however scientifically we view them. Such writing is White Paper language, not English.

The author of *British Vegetables and Herbs* sins in the same manner and to it adds the further faults of inconclusiveness and repetition which are particularly venial in so restricted a space. His task—both these books give, or rather leave, the impression of having been tasks—is to chronicle the development of our vegetables from their distant wild state to their present improved cultivation. A few pleasant facts emerge (the scarlet runner was first regarded as a purely decorative plant, and watercress was not sold in London till 1808) but on the whole there is little that the amateur of vegetables will not know already. As for herbs, they are given a scant two and a quarter pages and all we are told of tarragon is that it is a 'valuable aromatic plant much used in cooking'. Thymes are called 'old-fashioned shrublets that please everybody' and lemon thyme oddly enough is 'distinguished by its golden foliage and strong smell of lemons'. But for inadequacy, the palm goes to the statement that lavender, 'which was brought from the

South of Europe in 1658,' is 'seldom used in cookery but is greatly esteemed for its fragrance'. That is all—a sentence which might apply equally to civet, cedar-wood, or eau-de-cologne.

The illustrations include a colour-plate of fennel from an Anglo-Saxon manuscript of the eleventh century and reproductions from the herbals of Gerarde and other early writers.

JOHN VAUXHALL

THE POET IN THE THEATRE. RONALD PEACOCK.

Routledge. 10s. 6d.

To speak of the poet in the theatre is to suggest that elsewhere is to be found his true home. This certainly was so with Tennyson and with many other poets who wrote during the period which is covered by Professor Peacock's book, the last hundred and twenty years in Europe. The main thread of investigation which links together this collection of essays is the inquiry into the causes of the poet's failure to become a dramatist.

Yet there seems no more reason to expect a poet to be capable of dramatic structure than there is to expect a playwright to be master of poetic magic. Keats and Blake lose no honour by not being dramatists: Shaw and Galsworthy lose no honour by not writing their major plays in poetic metre. Professor Peacock, however, seems inclined to consider drama as a province of poetry, as the sonnet and the epic are provinces of poetry, and these essays show interest in the theatre as a medium less for dramatic expression than for poetic expression.

In all such discussions, a definition of terms is most necessary. Professor Peacock defines his terms by inference. He admits Chehov and Synge as poets because 'the conception is wholly poetic, the medium prose, and in their time they both stand as encouraging reminders that a drama in prose can have an imaginative vitality that brings it very close to poetry'. But O'Casey, who is surely the most Shakespearian of our practising dramatists, is excluded because his characters are 'not as important as the larger political tragedy of which

they are fortuitous victims'. Shaw has a place, but as a horrid example of the damage done to the cause of the poetic drama by Ibsen's sociological plays. Ibsen himself of course appears: not, surprisingly, as the author of *Brand* and *Peer Gynt*, but as an author who took the wrong turning and led the dramatic spirit up the garden cul-de-sac of realism. Professor Peacock's judgment is that, by the greater success of his realistic than of his poetic productions, 'A very powerful writer had a very wrong influence': a remarkable elevation of artistic values to the moral plane.

One is surprised at the inclusion of Henry James in this collection of studies on ten dramatists. The justification offered by the Preface is that Henry James' personal problem about drama merges in the general problem of drama in the literary situation of his time. The analysis in this essay of the dramatic element in James' novels is full of interest.

The remaining essays deal with such subjects as one might expect—T. S. Eliot and Yeats; Grillparzer, Hebbel, and Hofmannsthal; and Tragedy, Comedy, and Civilization. One misses figures such as Kaiser or Toller: Cocteau is not discussed mainly, it seems, because Professor Peacock has not seen his work in the theatre.

Each of the essays is self-contained, and although every one deals with the relation of the poet to the stage, some come much nearer than others to that central theme. But no increasing purpose runs through the volume, no growth and development of argument. It is as if a painter had blocked in a large canvas, and had then painted in, with care and with finished detail, ten only of the separate elements of the whole composition.

The most elaborately finished figure is of T. S. Eliot, through whom the main theme of the volume is introduced; for Professor Peacock considers that his work 'illumines retrospectively most of the problems of the whole period, and shows an impressive attempt to stabilize a proper conception of what poetic values in the theatre are'. Professor Peacock points out how the tragic hero has disappeared at the present time of social disintegration when moral judgments are applied to the non-personal rather than to individual

behaviour, and he suggests that Eliot's plays are important because in them the poet 'has combined what might seem to be irreconcilable: the sense of impersonal tragedy in which all are involved, and the dominating interest of a personal destiny'. This, however, does not prevent the essayist from dismissing, in another critique, Stephen Spender's *Trial of a Judge* with one or two sentences only, although he has just previously named it as being one of the three important English tragedies of the last twenty years (the two others are Eliot's ritual dramas).

The choice of T. S. Eliot's plays to introduce the main subject is an example of a curious tendency of modern criticism. In previous ages, genius was held to manifest itself in quantity as well as in quality: consider Mozart, Shakespeare, or Leonardo da Vinci. To-day, the doyen of the novel is E. M. Forster, who has written but half a dozen, and the Great Cham of the poetic drama is T. S. Eliot, whose plays are two in number.

These essays of Professor Peacock have each their own interest, and most of them provide stimulating critical enlightenment.

ALWYN ANDREW

THE MADNESS OF MERLIN. LAURENCE BINYON. With an Introduction by GORDON BOTTOMLEY. Macmillan. 6s.

The Madness of Merlin is a fragment, and in itself unfinished; the first part of a poem in dramatic form which was to have been completed in three parts. Binyon had been working on it, with many halts and intermissions, since 1923, but in a letter of 1942 to Gordon Bottomley he confesses that Part One is still only a draft, and that there are many loose ends. The loose ends remain in this posthumous publication, but it will be welcome for all that as an indication of what Binyon had in mind, and as a part working-out of an impressive idea.

Briefly, what Binyon proposed (and here one must rely almost entirely upon Mr. Bottomley's excellent Introduction) was this. He rejected the Merlin theme as an incident in Arthurian romance, and wondered what significance it might have for its own sake and for our day. The initial problem was

which Merlin to write about: him of Malory, of the French romances, of Tennyson, the demon-born sorcerer and counsellor, the doting greybeard, the prisoner of Nimue? For his especial purpose he turned from these to the Welsh sources, to that warrior prince of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Vita Merlini*, who joined the king of the North Welsh and the king of the Cumbrians in battle against the Picts of North Britain, and who, appalled by the death of his comrades in battle, fled the field and lived like an animal in the forest. Overheard there as he bewailed his lost friends, he was drawn to the court of his brother-in-law king Rhydderch by a minstrel singing of the grief of his own wife and sister; but soon he fled again, and in time was lost for ever. But according to an allied legend he was succoured in the forest by a peasant and his wife Chwimleian; he had by her a son, and was so reconciled to men. In Binyon's Part One the story is brought down to Merlin's re-affirmation of human ties with Himilian (that is, Chwimleian); he has failed 'to make himself invulnerable and independent'. In Part Two he was to learn that 'he needs the experience of love and suffering to be complete', and in this experience Merlin's son was to be a protagonist. In Part Three there was to be 'mostly dialogue about Utopias', with Merlin in old age learning, and presumably transmitting, his last lessons about the search for happiness. In all three parts Merlin's story would present (the words are Mr. Bottomley's) 'a consideration of the ardours and agonies and doubts and dilemmas of our contemporary life, by reference to the timeless factor common to all generations'.

To judge by what we have, Binyon would have written a fine distinctive poem on this noble theme. His verse is disciplined but fresh, with a free rhythm and adjustable syllabic metre. It expresses the new-old truths of human experience with precision and dignity, and yet with lightness and charm. The following lines are from Merlin's words to the bard Taliesin, who has come to fetch him from the forest:—

There were three sons of Mor.
 They were beautiful in battle.
 One after the other
 By this hand they fell.
 Their bright blood spirting gave me joy to see.

I shouted as I smote, my heart was hot,
 I was glad with a wild gladness.
 Suddenly I heard a voice,
 A voice that accused me:
 What hast thou done, Merlin?
 Thou hast broken the beauty of the world,
 Thou hast broken the lamp and extinguished the light.
 None can recover it, none!

The first four lines, it will be noticed, have the exact air of a translated englyn; they show a significant departure from the *Vita Merlini*, for it is the death of his foes, not his friends, which here appals him; and it is the accusing voice of the lines that follow which drives him to the forest. The passage may therefore serve to illustrate both the quality of the writing and the statement of the theme.

GWYN JONES

PORTRAITS IN PROSE. A Collection of Characters chosen by Hugh Macdonald. Routledge. 10s. 6d.

ANTHOLOGIES are not to everyone's liking: some readers, of whom I am one, prefer on the whole to make their selection according to principles of their own, rather than to be rationed with poems or passages chosen for them by somebody else; but *Portraits in Prose* is an Anthology with a difference. Here we are given descriptions of well over a hundred people, starting with William Rufus, translated in part from a Latin Chronicle by Sir John Hayward, and ending with an unendearing study of A. E. Housman by A. S. F. Gow, all written by contemporaries, though not necessarily during their own lifetime. The compiler has limited himself to studies made by those who personally knew the character described, and to truthful accounts, omitting satire, caricature, and descriptions of actual persons disguised as fiction. This is a new kind of collection, original, entertaining, and valuable, with something for every taste, and enough to start many new trails of enquiry which are worth following up elsewhere. My own immediate first choice was the fragment on Shakespeare by Ben Jonson, beginning with a revealing passage which throws light on author as well as character: 'I remember, the Players have often mentioned it as an honour

to *Shakespeare*, that in his writing (whatsoever he penn'd) hee never blotted out line. My answer hath beene, would he had blotted a thousand. Which they thought a malevolent speech.'

Among the lesser known characters there is a long and delightful account of Margaret Baxter, by her husband, Richard Baxter, the Puritan Divine. Modern husbands may sympathize with him when he complained three centuries ago: 'Her houshold-affairs she ordered with so great skill and decency, as that others much praised that which I was no fit judg of; I had been bred among plain mean people, and I thought that so much washing of Stairs and Rooms, to keep them as clean as their Trenchers and Dishes, and so much ado about cleanliness and trifles, was a sinful curiosity, and expense of servants time, who might that while have been reading some good book. But she that was otherwise bred, had somewhat other thoughts.'

When we are informed in a panegyric on Queen Elizabeth that 'Shee was rather liberall than magnificent', we are reminded that descriptions of exalted personages need to be read between the lines. When in one sketch of Trollope we read that 'His ordinary tones had the penetrative capacity of two people quarrelling, and his voice would ring through and through you, and shake the windows in their frames', and in another: 'I should say he had naturally a sweet voice, which through eagerness he had spoilt by holloing,' we realize that the same person impresses different people in different ways, not only through character-traits, but in actual appearance, face, figure, and voice. *Portraits in Prose* is a pleasant book to dip into, whether for reference or for leisurely browsing. If anybody still has a book-token left over from Christmas and is wondering how to use the gift, he might do worse than expend it on this collection so carefully compiled by Hugh Macdonald.

D. L. HOBMAN

BETWEEN MAN AND MAN. MARTIN BUBER. Kegan Paul.
12s. 6d.

I do not think that it is merely a personal statement about my

own stupidity if I claim that the beginning of *Between Man and Man* is exceptionally difficult—not so much because of any intrinsic difficulty of thought, but because of the unfamiliarity alike of that thought and its expression. The prudent reader will begin this collection of five essays by reading the last: I think that then he will find this a rewarding book and, at times, one illuminating much of experience.

Martin Buber is a Viennese Jew of scholarly family, now a professor in Jerusalem. He is alleged to inherit, carry forward, and chronicle the central tradition of Hebraic mysticism. This I am incompetent to judge, but the present book yields itself to one ignorant of Hasidist teaching and seems rather to document and be rooted in the profound cultural, economic, and ethnic interpenetrations and clashes of East-Central Europe. There is, indeed, a real affinity between so apparently different writers as the visionary Kafka and the scholarly Buber.

But this book does a great deal more than illustrate the perplexities of modern Europe: in its own right it adds something to contemporary philosophic thought. Buber begins with an analysis of the I-Thou relationship that holds under certain conditions of dialogue and dual human contact. This whole discussion inevitably takes places under the surveillance of the God-Man relationship (for Buber's mind is above all theocentric) and then leads us to perhaps the most interesting, certainly the most accessible, part of the book.

In this he displays and analyses the views of Kierkegaard and Max Stirner—views which mutually illumine each other. His criticism of both is just and valuable, if, perhaps more kind than either deserves. More significantly, given the recent existentialist furore, he goes on to trace the history of what he calls philosophical anthropology from Kant to Martin Heidegger and (less valuable) Scheler. This is a piece of virtuosity, each sentence fully weighted, each thought richer in implication than in statement. If M. Sartre is only comprehensible in view of Heidegger, then here is the best examination of Heidegger's clotted thought to be found in English.

Buber himself is much influenced by existentialism, but both his religion and his humanity are too great for him to fall into

the worst errors of contemporary individual nihilism. He understands social life, the significance and value of humane relations 'between man and man', and sees that in these too there is a penetration to the reality of being at least as revelatory as any to be found in the 'anguish', the 'shipwreck', the 'crisis' of a Jaspers or a Heidegger.

The attitudes and reactions of fashionable existential thinking seem to me either trivial or mistaken, but in Buber existentialism attains to a certain nobility—and he is concerned with much more than the merely 'existential' in this book.

One is glad that this well-translated volume is to be followed by other of Buber's works.

DONALD G. MACRAE

THE EARTH GIVES ALL AND TAKES ALL. CARADOC EVANS. Andrew Dakers. 7s. 6d.

THESE posthumous stories are the last fruits of a narrow, personal, but nevertheless intense art which is difficult both to place and to assess. One is reminded of those shorter stories of Maupassant which dealt, mostly in dialect, with the peasants of Normandy, for there is something of the same mood in Caradoc Evans' parables of Wales. The scene, however, is different. The scene in these stories is nearly always the same—a lonely farm, silent workers in the fields, or a mountain village, long dusty roads, cart-horses, and the feel of space; it is a part of the world that is timeless. The fundamental occurrences which Evans depicts might have happened B.C. or A.D.; indeed there is more than a flavour of the Old Testament in, for instance, *To Keep a Rainbow White*¹ or *Oldest Brother*. The people are fundamental, uncomplicated beings who live close to the earth and are driven by the same forces which govern the corn in their fields and the animals in their stalls; in the Spring they are moved by the sap of life mounting in them, in the torrid summer they reach their flowering, and in the winter they rest. Superstitions, generations of adages and wise sayings, give their consciousness a richness which is expressed in their almost Biblical utterances:—

¹ Printed in No. 94.

A strapper of thirty came to Ceri, a hamlet on Avon Ceri, and the farmers in the neighbourhood employed him. He had plenty of work to do because he was handy. He did not tell persons where he had come from and naturally many asked him.

'Where you from?'

'South Wales,' he said.

'Merthyr is in South Wales and Tredeger and Maesteg and other cities with more heads than you have seen potatoes. Sit you down and be you open and recite pieces about you.'

'Coal pits,' was all he told them.

'You have a secret in the tomb of your mouth,' they chided him. 'Your tongue is its tombstone and there is no writing on it and we cannot read what is not.'

That is how *To Keep a Rainbow White* starts and all the other short stories have the same rare, concentrated quality of a primitive parable; they make an immediate and extraordinary impression on the mind. But because the vision and the imagination displayed in these pieces is so personal, it is inevitable that for a time at least, they will not be read as widely as they deserved. The book has a long and interesting biographical memoir by George H. Green which throws light on Caradoc Evans' life and method of work. Seldom, in the past year or so, has so good a volume of stories appeared.

ROBIN KING

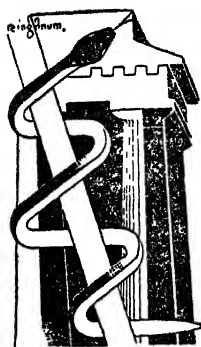
WHO RIDES A TIGER. MONTAGU SLATER. The Bodley Head. 7s. 6d.

WRITERS like Maclaren-Ross and Gerald Kersh have developed an elaborately colloquial way of writing their stories which depends, for its most striking effects, on the casual, everyday looseness of speech; it is racy, often full of 'punch', and in large quantities, not a little wearisome. It is the nearest approach that English can make to the stark, uninhibited American style. In *Who Rides a Tiger*, Montagu Slater has adopted it to get across his story of Claude Blackstone and the M.I.5.

Even though I had been at it for three years, the job in which I found myself at the end of the war took a lot of getting used to.

Charms

against Pain



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That is the first sentence of the book, and it is a perfect example of the new method, the principal aim of which seems to be to rush the reader along at break-neck speed. The story gets off to a flying start. The war finished, Claude Blackstone finds himself still in the M.I.5 with various peace-time assignments to deal with: he checks up on a Dutch sailor for the Dutch Government and investigates the activities of an economic theorist; but both these jobs do not prove to his taste, and his 'boss', a Group Captain (highly mobile), gives him a new secret file with a particularly dirty job to do, a kind of frame-up of a scientific group. Here the sterile, astringent atmosphere of the story gathers volume; one is suddenly jolted into the realization, the suspicion, that Montagu Slater has based this novel on experience of a particularly nasty order. This is not merely the piece of slick fiction that it gives the appearance of being; it is also a warning, and if it is cynical it is the cynicism of despair and not of an ideal destroyed. It seems to me that the chief weakness of this style is that, though it gives one a weirdly lit nightmare, which is the intention, it also fails to convey any natural reactions or emotions. Everything and everybody is terribly hard-boiled. When Kate demands a little affection, a little attention; when their young son dies suddenly, Blackstone turns away with a 'what the hell' shrug of his shoulders and turns his attention to snooping the private lives of his victims.

Who Rides a Tiger is arid, brittle, sometimes too self-consciously 'bright'; it will not be to everybody's taste, but in its limited way it has something worth saying to offer—despite the pretentious and irrelevant reference to Kierkegaard in the publisher's blurb.

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WHEN I first looked into Miss Compton-Burnett's latest novel I could not rid myself of a strange feeling that Firbank had lived to mature and clarify his great talent. Here once again, I thought, was the significance of the moment captured through the trite conversations of ordinary people. A little

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more reading soon convinced me that I was wrong, that though there might be many a Firbank lurking amongst this writer's literary ancestors, nevertheless her own expression is of her own talent, unique in its form, deep in its penetration.

The purpose of elliptical conversation—and this book is almost entirely conveyed through elliptical conversation—is to force genuine co-operation between the parties to it. The second party, the reader, co-operates or the conversation dies, because the talk is on the level of the still beds of the mind and no one can maintain talk on that level unless his own mind bears a family resemblance to the other's. Through this co-operative process, the reader of *Manservant and Maidservant* completes the ellipsis and sees the characters as the author envisaged them when she first admitted the reader to their circle. Charlotte, Mortimer, Horace, and the others do not talk-think in the stream of consciousness style that was so popular a decade ago. Instead, their conversation weaves its way from a querulous inquiry about a smoking chimney back to a querulous inquiry about a smoking chimney, and all the way the contents of the given minds have been conveyed through the reflections upon their surfaces. The whole power of the book has lain in the way in which that changing, rippling surface of conversation has led the reader, first to appreciate the emotional *undertow* and then to see, very clearly, the psychological rocks and boulders lying upon the muddy floor.

One minor character, for instance, is a shopkeeper who has all her life managed to conceal her great secret: that she can neither read nor write. The sanctimonious old butler learns this secret and invites the shopkeeper to tea in the kitchen, having the hidden purpose of assisting this lady to overcome her disability. A wholly admirable object, yet he cannot suppress his delight in the inward terror he suffers by deliberately hovering over the forbidden subject. Like the tactless Chinaman who 'when he meets a cripple, can talk of nothing but feet', the butler contrives to revel in the psychological masochism of continuous references to literacy and illiteracy which seem to proclaim his knowledge of the dread secret and then, always when it seems he has gone too



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far to withdraw, adroitly withdrawing by giving his remarks a general application and including Miss Macpherson amongst the habitual readers of the world.

Simultaneously with this scene in the kitchen, the addled master of the house, Horace, is actually torturing himself with the belief that two of his infant sons have plotted to murder him! Perhaps the highest praise that can be given to Miss Compton-Burnett's writing is this, that this idea which seems so improbable for even the most heavy of brains, is absolutely natural by the time it is reached. Horace is exactly the type of person who would credit the incredible, providing the incredible were cheerless enough to fit into his own peculiarly depraved notions of how children think and feel about their parents.

F. J. BROWN

MISTRESS MASHAM'S REPOSE. T. H. WHITE. Cape. 8s. 6d.

GULLIVER, it may be remembered, brought some of the Lilliputian cattle to England with him and made a handsome profit showing them around before selling them for six hundred pounds. Captain John Biddel, Gulliver's rescuer, went much further and fared a lot worse. The avaricious Mr. Biddel of Deptford returned to Lilliput, carried away a boxful of the inhabitants for exhibition at fairs, and lost the lot one night when he fell into a drunken sleep leaving the box unlocked.

Biddel passed from history and the Lilliputians were never heard of again until Maria discovered their numerous descendants living on an island on the lake at Malplaquet, a ruined stately home of England about four times the size of Buckingham Palace, and where the cook keeps a bicycle in the small oven for riding down the corridors when she has to answer the bell.

What makes this fantasy so peculiarly interesting is the fact that, despite it having all the philosophical implications that one expects when a worth-while writer treats of two differing scales of vision, the actual framework of plot and incident is in no way different to that of any adventure-cum-fairy tale

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written for growing juveniles. In no way different, that is, except in its gorgeous comicality. Nothing, I think, in all this school of literature, can quite equal the mellow parsonic vein in which the Vicar sits sipping wine with the Governess, discussing how to make Maria lead them to the little people and thinking out ways of selling the same Lilliputians to several different buyers. With a benign smile, he decides to leave the dear governess to explain this transaction away whilst he gently cruises round the world. Of course, Maria saves the little people from the wiles of her grotesque guardians, whilst the Lilliputians help her discover a missing will and send her guardian fiends to prison, but that is only as it should be and by the way; the play, of wit and reflection, is the thing.

One thing that has always puzzled at least one reader of *Gulliver's Travels* has been the apparently haphazard way in which objects, distances, and so on were diminished. Very few of the necessities or amenities of life for the ancient Lilliputians seem to have been made with their best interests at heart, most things seem to be either too small or too large. Mr. T. H. White has removed this source of annoyance by correcting the scale: one Lilliputian foot is equal to one normal inch.

Delightful though the book is as frolic, I feel that there is one serious error in it considered as a fable. That is, that not all of Mr. White's comments and observations are conveyed through the logic of his fantasy. He has a delightful stock-figure of an absent-minded Professor who has a number of shrewd asides with which one cannot help but agree; yet that does not make such remarks anything more than asides, and all such speculations and criticisms as he has to make would have been much more effective had they arisen naturally from the Lilliputian 'economy'.

Swift is obviously one of Mr. White's enthusiasms, and I should think that *Mistress Masham's Repose* will certainly infect others with this most joyous of manias. Swift himself would have liked the way in which the cook, searching for Maria who has mysteriously disappeared, cycles forlornly up and down the corridors of Malplaquet, ringing her bell ener-



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getically outside each door. Greatly, too, would he have enjoyed the discomfiture of the Vicar and the Governess, bogged in the benighted depths of Monk's-Unmentionable-cum-Mumble.

F. J. BROWN

A DISTANT SUMMER. EDITH SAUNDERS. Illustrated. Sampson Low. 15s.

AT first sight, the State visit of Queen Victoria to Paris in 1855 may seem a far cry from our present preoccupations, but in point of fact the cheers which greeted that visit, the compliments which wily Louis Napoleon paid to the Queen, and the italicized gasps with which she received them have, can we but hear, an important bearing on our day and all we need fear is that the record of those crowded balls, those royal receptions may be made once more an excuse for one of those re-creatings of trivia whose fashion, we hope, is as faded as its formula has for long been suspect.

Miss Saunders is certainly no such mal-practitioner. Her knowledge is such, and her taste so unerring, that these, allied to a perfect sense of period, give us a picture which may be described as a true piece of historical insight.

Without forgoing any of the pleasures of picturesque description—and the visit, for ten days, was ablaze with opportunities for them—she contrives to dissect whilst she seems mainly, most giftedly, to describe. It is as if these galas, this gay and glittering *firt* between two monarchs, which one of them described in her diary as a 'dream', were submitted to a mental microscope and we see it, this formal occasion of little more than a week, stretching down to our own day, catching us in its toils, as it was itself the expression of other toils in which the participants were unwittingly caught, until we almost feel that we are taking part in these last-century festivities; as unwillingly as would have Victoria, had she known of what they were to prove the portent, and as Prince Albert perhaps did know and did feel. It was the reversal of his policy which they were celebrating, not only the condescension of his wife, as ruler of the greatest empire in the world, to an upstart emperor who had brought back militarism to Europe. Strauss might

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write special music for the ball, but Bismarck bowed on the dais, and each rose that wilted under the heat of the lights could be matched by a man dying before Sebastopol.

The Emperor displayed his balloon that dropped bombs, and above the lights—those lights of gas and electricity, twin blessings of an age which was to usher in plenty for all—rocket-propelled explosives were fired and the *Illustrated London News* remarked—jokingly, for did not the alliance mean peace, even though it was ‘winning’ a war?—‘soon we may hear of the possibility of bombarding Dover from Calais’.

Then the Royal yacht sailed for home and for what the visit brought forth—results very different from those which, in 1855, Victoria and her consort imagined. History, which a cynic has described as the logical outcome of our fears, has made it a grim story, made more grisly by the gaiety of its setting. Miss Saunders knows all about the setting and in addition to her knowledge of history, has what is rarer in a woman—sense of politics. These talents are so assured that the research and documentation which have gone to her book never prevent her style from flowing with well-mannered ease. It only remains to add that Napoleon Bonaparte is shown as what he was rather than as what legend was used to make him; that the temptation to release scorn of Louis Napoleon in caricature or of his Empress in cattiness has been resisted; and that Prince Albert emerges as, one feels, Time will more and more have him emerge—underestimated, underpraised. The book is appropriately embellished with seventeen full-page plates from the *Illustrated London News* of the time.

CHARLES CALVERT

EDITORIAL

August 1947

OUR cover this month is printed in blue and red upon yellow. This is in compliment to Venezuela, whose colours they are. The contents which follow are either from or about Venezuela. The issue does not follow the pattern of other of our special numbers dealing with countries which I prefer to call 'abroad' than 'foreign'. This is partly because I hold it bad to be stereotyped—the motto which has been foisted on us, often rather enviously, is, after all, 'unpredictable'—but partly because less is known of Venezuela in this country than of, say, Denmark, the subject of our last special number.

For this reason it has seemed to me necessary to include this month not only examples of Venezuelan literature, but articles which will enlarge the average reader's rather guide-book idea of Venezuela as 'renowned for petroleum'. We are accordingly happy in being able to print two essays by Venezuelan writers, Jorge Luciani and Luis Cabana, which deal with two great figures of their country, Simón Bolívar and Andrés Bello. Dr. Robin Humphries relates, in what I humbly think masterly fashion, something of the history and problems of the country, and since it is the vexed question of language which in a sense makes translation inevitable, Professor W. Atkinson descants on the position of Latin-American studies in our own country.

As to this last, I should like it to be noticed that I have printed along with translations, the original Spanish of some of the poems. I have done this on occasion before, and I propose to increase rather than to diminish the habit. So long as travel remains restricted, the only way for British to retain lingual ability, or be prompted by curiosity to acquire it, is to read in other tongues than their own. My readers are to be presumed to be educated, and consequently I propose in due time to follow the present Spanish with verse in French,

Danish, and German. This, however, is taking us from rather than to Venezuela, so allow me to observe that, as well as the poems, it has been possible to include some popular folk-songs.

I need hardly say that we could not have done this so readily with an older country. Venezuela is a young country, and one apt to be at times a little overshadowed by its more showy neighbours. Just as it is a sign of her youth that there is still a body of living folk-song, so is it another that we have printed no excerpts from plays: Venezuela has not as yet a drama. It may be that the drama of her own comparatively recent past is as yet too close, but it is that, resulting in her freedom from foreign tyranny, which makes her, as a young country, particularly of interest to us to-day. It only depends on the direction taken by the vigour which originally achieved emancipation to make a young country a more than rising one, and I think, and hope, it will be found that this number gives a good and reasonably comprehensive indication of the trend that direction is taking. As Simón Bolívar himself said: 'The prospect of a great people governed by authorities that are completely united, who limit themselves to their promises—that prospect is fascinating.' And if English readers may wish to acquaint themselves further with the character of Bolívar they may find much in his declaration that 'my conscience alone rules me: it is at peace; nothing disturbs it. For what does it matter if one has, or has not, the superfluous things of life? The necessities never fail'.

It is that spirit which raises a country and it is impossible to exaggerate the importance of Simón Bolívar to Venezuelans. Was he not the Liberator? Did he not humiliate the Lion of Castile from the Orinoco to the Potosí? For the liberty of his country he abandoned his titles. He deprived himself of the pleasures of a vast fortune. He considered it his glory 'to serve and not to command: to defeat the enemy and to yield the victory to my fellow citizens'—a belief which later statesmen who have found themselves at the head of a victorious nation might well share. And indeed all would do well to consider the last quotation I shall make from Venezuela's national hero—'I should consider myself dishonoured if I were to promise what I could not fulfil.'

I am glad to take this opportunity of thanking the Cultural Attaché of the Venezuelan Embassy in London for her assistance in preparing this issue, and to welcome to England the new Venezuelan Ambassador to the Court of St. James, Dr. Don Juan Oropesa. He was exiled under Gomez, and to-day as one of the outstanding figures of Acción Democrática, the Democratic Party, he represents the new Venezuela—eager to be in the vanguard of progress in all spheres of life. A famous historian and sociologist, well-known throughout Latin America, he tells us in the prologue to his best-known book, *Sucre*, that the lesson he has learnt from his historical studies is Sucre's own: that victory should not blind nations in their dealings with others, and that they should in peace adhere to the principles they proclaimed when fighting.

Readers will be interested to know that a resumé of the recent Danish number was broadcast on 12th June in the Danish service of the B.B.C., and copies were ordered by Denmark for presentation to the leaders of the delegations from all countries to the Youth Conference held in Jugoslavia at the beginning of last month. We regret that this issue has been for some time sold out, and present conditions forbid further printing.

SIMÓN BOLÍVAR, THE LIBERATOR

JORGE LUCIANI

OUTSTANDING amongst the manifold faculties of Bolívar, the Liberator, was the marvellous aptitude which he displayed in his knowledge of men. He would penetrate and influence even the most reserved and mistrustful of consciences. With consummate accuracy he could take the measure of most men, and, extremely great and noble in concealing envy within his breast, he never failed to appraise with justice and at their true value, strange or adverse conditions, assigning to each one the place and the honour which suited best his particular capacity and merits.

A large part of his personal wizardry rested on the skill with which he stimulated the fibre of all those who served under his orders, even to the point of extracting from them the maximum of efficiency and of complete compliance with his wishes. The peculiar subtlety of his genius, enhanced by his experience of the world, gave him a clear indication as to when he should employ reasoning and cajolery, when conviction and authority or when insinuation and sternness; when, for the furtherance of his grandiose schemes, a moderate and energetic line of conduct was suitable; or, when he should invoke the aid of honour, of deliberate calculation, of patriotism, of ambition, of duty, of pride, or of glory. In the course of private conversation he persuaded the timid, the reluctant, the irresolute, and in the same way he kindled the ardour of the patriots, the confirmed partisans, and the valiant. In the tribune and in the camp he electrified the crowds, animating their idealistic hankerings, and their sublime passions for liberty, and for their country—desires and passions which seethe in every human heart. He was a grand master of psychology. With a single look he would reveal a soul, with four words he would determine the characteristic features of anyone. His judgments

upon some of his lieutenants are decisive. History has compiled and confirmed them.

'My friend,' remarked Francisco I on one occasion to Benvenuto Cellini, 'I do not know who is the happier—the prince who meets a man who fulfils his desires, or the artist who meets a prince who knows how to appreciate him.' The suggestive phrase of the King of Gaul always recurs to my mind when I study the public career of Antonio José de Sucre. Because, in very truth, if the critical eye of Bolívar had not discovered him, it may be conjectured that the young officer from the East, so moderate and serious, so upright and loyal, amidst insubordinate and ambitious officers of superior rank, devoid of all notion of patriotism, deaf to all reasonable counsel, slaves to their unbridled passions, with nothing more to restrain or to guide them than courage and brute force—one may infer that he would either have been victimized, or would never have advanced beyond the rank of staff major of a division. None of his former chiefs or fellow countrymen succeeded in visualizing at all his capabilities, still less his brilliant future. The Liberator, on the other hand, at once detected in the psychology of his subaltern what the others all failed to see.

We are in Cúcuta. It is the year 1820. Soldiers and civilians hastily flock together, proud to welcome their President on his return from Carthagena. Mark that young general of twenty-five years of age, of stern countenance and luxuriant whiskers. He has neither prestige nor friendships to recommend him. His circumspect attitude arouses the attention, or rather the curiosity of his companions. 'Who can he be?' they all wonder. Then His Excellency the Liberator forcibly exclaims: 'He is one of the best officers in the army: he combines the professional knowledge and experience of Soublette and the kindly character of Briceño Méndoz with the genius of Santander and the activity of Salom. Strange as it may seem, he is neither known, nor are his abilities suspected. I am determined to bring him into the limelight, convinced that some day he will rival me.' Time and opportunity made the young officer the Grand Marshal of Ayacucho, first President of Bolivia, and it will not be out of order, seeing that it concerns de Sucre, to bear in mind those other words, which, years afterwards,

Bolívar addressed to him: 'You are the man of War, and I am the man of difficult affairs.'

He honoured General Francisco de Paula Santander by attributing to him a vast talent for administration and for politics. For five years he placed upon his shoulders the overwhelming burden of the civil government of Gran Colombia. Whilst Bolívar was passing through the South, breaking down barriers and founding nations, he was directing his fellow citizens to a law-abiding life, and instructing them in the practices of citizenship. Bolívar called him one day 'the man of law', and undoubtedly the founder of the liberal party of Colombia recognized him as such up to the year 1862.

Carthagená was in a state of revolt. He sent there the brave and high-born General Mariano Montilla, but he needed a companion. Bolívar then wrote to Señor J. M. Castillo: 'General Montilla asks me to send Córdoba, or some other native of Granada, which is what they want there, and he strongly recommends to me Señor Ucross, who is getting on very well indeed, of which I am very glad: so I will just send a commander-general, and for the present I have no one else in mind except Córdoba, because, apart from his violent disposition, he possesses many qualities suitable for that command, and *'because to Carthagená one can only send a very manly man'* and one to whom they can pay deep respect, a sentiment which General Córdoba will inspire to great advantage.

Colonel Juan Santana was secretary in the Government office of the Liberator. Although he was not a man-of-arms, he held the rank and wore the uniform of a colonel. He enjoyed the most complete confidence of his Chief. Some inquisitive fellow tried to extract from the latter how this originated, to which he promptly replied: 'Santana has the virtue of sealing wax: you may burn it, but it still retains its secret.'

He always held in special esteem as the foremost in loyalty General Rafael Urdaneta, a man whose whole life was a supreme example of inviolable fidelity.

'The Courier of the South (says the daily newspaper of Bucaramanga, page 48) carried letters from General Flores to the Liberator. This General, charged with the command of the army of the South, has addressed to His Excellency a copy of

a letter, which General Santander, in Ocaña, sends by the same courier to his compeer. His analysis is this: he speaks of the good and of the ill which may proceed from the Convention; of the mistrust which it inspires in the general public and the troops, and of the general hatred which exists against many of its members, and he concludes by saying:—that he and the army under his command are ready to march to Bogotá, and still further, if necessary, and behead all the enemies of the Liberator, of Centralism, and of national unity, and that he will begin with *him* (Santander), if, as they say, he is the head of the demagogic party.—What do you say about the eloquence of Flores? asked the Liberator.—That he is capable of doing it, replied General Fergusson.—Of doing it, yes, replied His Excellency, but not of having written it. I know General Flores: in astuteness, in the subtleties of warfare and of politics, in the art of intrigue, and in ambition, there are few in Colombia who can surpass him. He is gifted with great natural talent, which he himself is further developing by study and reflection: Flores has only lacked birth and education. To all this he unites great courage and a faculty for making himself liked; he is generous, and he knows well how to distribute his money opportunely; but his ambition stands out predominantly amongst all his qualities and defects, and is the motive power in all his actions. Flores, if I am not mistaken, is called to play a considerable role in this country. To sum up all that has been said, I do not believe that he wrote to Santander that letter, as he says. He has addressed this copy to me, thinking to flatter me. Nevertheless General Flores is one of the Generals of the Republic in whom I repose the utmost confidence, and I believe him to be my friend.’ Subsequent acts on the part of the Venezuelan, General Flores, who ultimately rose to be President of Ecuador, established the accuracy of the Liberator’s words.

With reference to Don Fernando of Peñalver, so wise in counsel and so firm in his convictions, Bolívar once remarked: ‘He spoke the truth without fear of its bitterness, without desire to flatter, and without fear of displeasing.’

The Chilean Canon, doctor José Córtes de Madariaga, always showed indications of possessing a restless and seditious

spirit. At the dawn of the revolution his line of procedure was decisive, patriotic, and glorious, as it was also favourable to vigorous civic undertakings. But in the course of the war of emancipation, words and deeds not directed towards this one sole object induced in him a state of apathy. War involves action. Madariaga, a prisoner in Spain, returns to Venezuela and is one of the originators of the famous 'Little Congress of Cariaco'. Afterwards he passes on to Magdalena, and as soon as the news comes to the knowledge of Bolívar, he communicates with General Mantilla as follows: 'If any insurgent arrives in the territory under your command, ship him back again so that he cannot disturb or interfere with the progress of public affairs. The canon is mad, and must be treated as such.'

The austere patrician, doctor Cristobal de Mendoza, he described with the polished phrase: 'A model of virtue and of useful acts of goodwill.'

A long time before the commencement of the movement which culminated in the dismemberment of Gran Colombia, Bolívar wrote to General Santander about doctor Miguel Peña, one of the instigators of the said movement, as follows: 'Doctor Peña is an energetic man, talented and courageous . . . and it is of great importance that you keep him on the side of the Government (in Bogotá), flattering him with the hope of achieving a high destiny; on no account must he go to Venezuela, so that our country, yourself, and I may not some day have something to lament.'

With master-hand he portrays Leonardo Infante, an heroic barbarian. In a letter to don Fernando de Peñalver, dated 11th July, 1825, he makes the following emphatic statement: 'Tell doctor Peña that nobody could like him (Infante) better than I do; but that, on the other hand, there was no one more savage than he: that, a thousand times before he had said that his one and universal instinct was to kill the living and to destroy the inanimate: that, if he saw a lamb hanging up, he would plunge his spear into it, and, if he saw a house, he would burn it—in my very presence. He had a general antipathy for everything. He could never tolerate inaction. Rendén, who was worth a thousand times more than he, he would have liked to kill a thousand times.'

When Bolívar was in Lima he received a letter from General Bermúdez, in which the latter explained that they had decorated General Páez with the medal of Perú, adding that he was no longer the chief. The letter teemed with boastful expressions, and he ended by saying that he did not include himself amongst the number of those Barbascan Generals, and that if the government had forwarded the medal to him, he would have had the pleasure of sending it back (Bermúdez to the Liberator, 26th March, 1826).

When the Liberator received the letter, he smiled. What miseries our fellow-countrymen have to endure! he exclaimed. Really I do not know how I can belong to the same country as these men. Bermúdez is one of those who, in the wars of the continent, have made the name of Venezuela celebrated as the prototype of the rash warrior. He is only of value for the army; but he has his weak points: he is very conceited. Look at the innuendoes of Padre Cobos which he addresses to me. I am going to prove it. Do you notice the protests under which he will refuse to accept the medal? Well, you will see. As a matter of fact, shortly after that he sent to Bermúdez the much-coveted decoration . . . and the valiant Bermúdez had not sufficient courage to carry out his words and to return it, but ever since then he has displayed it on his breast on every possible occasion. (Juan José Churión, the *Humorismo del Liberator*, pages 160 and 161.)

A multitude of quotations could be chosen to stress this point, but the facts suffice to give an idea, however vague, of the extraordinary perspicacity, the incomparable subtlety, the profound knowledge of men, which the Liberator possessed.

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THE EMANCIPATION OF SPANISH SOUTH AMERICA

ROBIN A. HUMPHREYS

THE liberation of Latin America from Spanish and Portuguese control in the first quarter of the nineteenth century was one of the formative events of modern history. It opened a vast region, more than double the size of Europe, to trade and immigration. It marked a further stage in that shift from a Mediterranean to an Atlantic civilization which had begun when the New World was discovered. It brought into existence what ultimately became twenty separate states whose full rôle in world politics we can as yet but dimly foresee. And in commerce and strategy, as well as in politics, it was destined to have far-reaching effects on the balance of world affairs.

It was, of course, the Napoleonic invasion of the Spanish peninsula and the overthrow of the Spanish royal house in 1808 that precipitated the revolutions for Spanish American independence. Never has the interconnection between the Old World and the New been more clearly demonstrated. The Spaniards rose, as Spaniards will always rise, against an alien hand, and the resistance movement in Spain was at once paralleled by a resistance movement in Spanish America. Funds were raised to help the cause of Spain. The agents of Napoleon, who soon appeared, were repulsed with loyal indignation, and the authority of the captive king, Ferdinand VII, was everywhere proclaimed.

But, in the years between 1808 and 1810, the news from Spain was doubtful and disturbing. The position of the royal officials in Spanish America was itself anomalous; some at least were suspected of 'collaborationist' sympathies with the French invader and the puppet monarch, Joseph Bonaparte; and, in this atmosphere of suspicion and uncertainty, it was natural that the creole population, the Spaniards born in America, should come to regard themselves as just as much the residuary legatees of the authority of the Crown as the

people of the Peninsula. The colonies were crown colonies. The Crown had fallen into the hands of France. Power, it could be argued, and was argued, had therefore reverted to the people. From this there was no going back. The spirit of Spanish Americans was as high as the spirit of Spaniards, and, as the English colonists, in 1776, victorious in their struggles with the royal prerogative, refused to accept the sovereignty of Parliament, so the Spanish colonists, when the Crown was in captivity, refused to accept subordination to the people of the Peninsula.

Already, in 1809, there had been disturbances in Upper Peru (the modern Bolivia), and at Quito a group of citizens, citing the example of 'our transatlantic brothers', deposed their Governor and usurped his authority—a course they soon had reason to repent. But it was not till the news arrived in 1810 that the French had overrun Andalucía, that the Central Junta of resistance in Spain had been forced to dissolve, and that a Regency of Five had been established in refuge at Cádiz, that the crisis in the relations between Spain and her colonies was reached.

This news was received in Venezuela in April. There could be no disguising its gravity. The Regency demanded that its authority be recognized. But who were the Regents? And how long would they survive? This was the moment for decision. On the morning of Holy Thursday, 19th April, 1810, the town council of Caracas acted. Meeting in extraordinary assembly, and swayed by a group resolute for freedom, it deposed the Captain-General of Venezuela and assumed his authority.

Such things, of course, had been done before. To those familiar with the history of Spanish American municipal administration instances of like action leap to the mind. But the loyal and outraged author of the *Recuerdos sobre la Rebelión de Caracas* was so far right when he declared that the Captain-General, by surrendering the province to the revolutionaries, surrendered half the world to flames, so far right in that the 19th April, 1810, is the day on which the general emancipation of the Spanish American colonies began.

True, the cabildo of Caracas avowed its loyalty to Ferdinand VII. But, almost in the same breath, it proclaimed that

Venezuela had taken her place 'among the free nations of America'. The Supreme Junta, which it appointed, invited the municipalities of Spanish America to follow the example of Caracas, even indeed to establish a Spanish American Confederation on the lines, as an English commentator noted, of the Amphictyon of Greece; agents were dispatched to carry the news to Washington and London; and it was thus that there arrived in England, in July, 1810, to claim for Venezuela the protection and assistance of Great Britain, a young man, not yet quite twenty-seven years old, whose name was Simón Bolívar.

What happened at Caracas in April, happened at Buenos Aires in May, at Santa Fé de Bogotá in July, and at Santiago de Chile in September. Juntas and cabildos assumed the powers of viceroys, presidents, and captains-general. In each case these new authorities proclaimed their loyalty to the Crown. It was not, indeed, till July, 1811, that Venezuela formally proclaimed her independence, and she was the first of the future states to do so. But the revolution of the 25th May, 1810, in Buenos Aires, like that of the 19th April, 1810, at Caracas, was, in effect, if not in formal fact, a declaration of independence; and it was under the legal fiction of obedience to a captive crown that a movement begun as an assertion of freedom from French control was transformed into a war of independence from Spain.

That this transformation took place was due partly to the release of aspirations long cherished by a part at least of the colonial population. But it was due also to the folly of the Peninsular Spaniards themselves. As Lord North had once closed the port of Boston, so the Regency proclaimed Venezuela to be in a state of blockade; and that action was the beginning of international as well as civil war. As the British Parliament in the eighteenth century had been unable to conceive of a Commonwealth of Nations united by allegiance to the Crown, so the Cortes which met at Cádiz in 1810 was unable to abandon the idea of colonial dependence. The Peninsular Spaniards clung to the principle of subordination, and it did not need the restoration of Ferdinand VII, and despotism, in 1814, to make independence ultimately sure.

But there were reasons more profound than these for the collapse of one of the greatest empires that the world has ever seen. We do not now believe that the Spanish empire in the New World survived for more than three hundred years 'in a state of premature and perpetual decay'; and, it is probably true that, at the end of the eighteenth century, the colonies of Spain were in a more flourishing state than at any time in their history. Everything, as Humboldt tells us of New Granada, seemed to announce the 'increase of population and industry'; and what was true of New Granada was true elsewhere. The revenues of New Spain increased more than six times in the eighteenth century. Between 1776 and 1790, the customs receipts at Buenos Aires multiplied by nearly forty times, and even remote Chile felt the vigorous impulse of change. The economy of Spanish America was an expanding economy. Colonial society was a developing society. Nor was this all. The age of reform and the age of enlightenment preceded the age of revolution. The evidence of newspapers and clubs, of literature and travel, all attest that at the end of the eighteenth century a new creole bourgeoisie had emerged, increasingly wealthy, increasingly in touch with the outside world, and increasingly alive to the doctrines of English and American political thought and of French revolutionary ideas.

This was heady wine. As Canning said of the American Revolution, 'the operation of that example, sooner or later, was inevitable,' and the impact of these ideas was the more profound because of the defects which still remained in the structure of Spanish colonial administration itself. First, however enlightened the reforms which had been made in the structure of Government, Government remained absolutist, both in spirit and in form; and absolutism contains the seeds of its own destruction. The imperial reforms of one of the most enlightened of Spanish rulers had yet failed to broaden the basis of colonial government. The creole population was still largely excluded from the work of administration. It was still made to feel its inferiority to the Peninsular Spaniard. Its aspirations had been stimulated, but they had not been satisfied. Secondly, the trade of Spanish America was still, theoretically,

a monopoly of Spain. This, of course, conformed to the practice of mercantilist empires, and the stringent methods by which the monopoly was enforced had been greatly liberalized. But the fact remained that Spain was unable to provide enough or cheap enough goods for the supply of her vast dominions; and what Spain could not do, the smuggler and the interloper could. Her economy had failed to keep pace with the expanding economy of Spanish America. She had failed to participate in the commercial expansion of Europe, and the result was a foregone conclusion. Not so much decay within the empire, as the pressure exerted from without, presaged the collapse of the imperial structure.

That collapse was hastened when, in 1796, Spain went to war with England, and, with a brief interval, remained at war for twelve years more. This was the crisis of the Spanish empire. Britain was mistress of the seas. Spain and her empire were severed. The colonists were thrown upon their own and foreign resources, and the experience was fatal to any real restoration of old relations. It is significant that from Caracas and Buenos Aires, where foreign trade had most deeply penetrated and where foreign contacts were most numerous, the revolution took its rise and drew its strength. Now, also, it was England's turn to promote the independence of the Spanish colonies, as Spain had once promoted the independence of the English. In 1797, the Governor of Trinidad was instructed to aid revolutionary movements on the mainland. In England that seasoned revolutionary, Francisco de Miranda, was a focus of conspiracy, striving to interest England, France, and the United States in plans for the independence of his country, and in 1806, a British expedition actually invaded the River Plate and captured Buenos Aires. 'Such unexampled generosity and moderation,' remarked *The Times*, did the invaders show, as would 'doubtless make the inhabitants of the Spanish colonies wish to be connected with Great Britain.' But, strangely enough, the colonists took a different view. The liberating expedition, if liberating is the word, was repelled, repelled by the creoles themselves, after the Viceroy had fled, and that defeat resounded throughout South America and stirred creole blood everywhere. Conditions in Buenos Aires

were never the same again, and the British invasions prepared the way for the famous revolution of the 25th May, 1810.

The movement begun in 1810, was the work of a small intelligent creole minority. It released incalculable forces. It precipitated a series of revolutions or civil wars in which region warred against region, countryside against town, chieftain against chieftain, as well as patriots against loyalists. Its consuming fires spread from one end of the continent to the other, and the agony endured for fifteen years. It is a tribute to the strength of conservative forces, and of Spanish institutions, that at the end the structure of society remained essentially unchanged. The forms of political organization were re-cast; the social fabric remained the same.

But the price of political liberation was heavy. For Venezuela, in that early and hopeful dawn of 1810, it meant untold horror. The First and Second Republics alike succumbed to reconquest and destruction. The cities were opened to pillage. The countryside was laid waste. Tens of thousands perished by the lance and sword. And what happened in Venezuela was enacted in different form in New Granada and Chile. By 1816, indeed, it was only in the former Viceroyalty of La Plata that the revolution seemed to survive, and even there the balance was precarious, for while in Buenos Aires Government had succeeded Government in rapid succession the disintegration of the old Viceroyalty had proceeded apace, and, across the River Plate, the Banda Oriental was the scene of chaos and war.

This was the critical year of the revolutionary wars. In 1816, the reaction was at its height, the cause was in the balance. Then, by one of those paradoxes which so frequently disorder, and adorn, the pages of South American history, the situation was transformed. In the foothills of the Andes, at Mendoza, José de San Martín had been quietly organizing his Army of the Andes. In 1817, he led it by heroic paths across the mountain barrier to fall upon the royalists in Chile; and from Chile he was to sail in the ships of the new republic to begin the liberation of Peru. And, in the north, Bolívar, who had twice been forced to flee his country, had not lost faith. 'The destiny of America,' he had written in the dark days of 1815, 'has been

settled irrevocably. The bond that held it to Spain has been sundered; it is less difficult to unite the two continents than to reconcile the two countries.' Then, in December, 1816, he once again landed in Venezuela, formed his capital at Angostura, and, in 1819, led his ragged army across the scorching plains and Andean heights to liberate New Granada.

Caracas gave Bolívar to South America, Buenos Aires gave San Martín, and when, in 1822, the two men met in that celebrated and mysterious interview of Guayaquil, the liberating stream from the north and the liberating stream from the south were joined. Thereafter San Martín withdrew, to leave the field clear for Bolívar. Returning to Santiago and Buenos Aires, he sailed for Europe and Brussels, to die at Boulogne in 1850. It remained for Bolívar to complete the emancipation of Peru, and when, on the 9th December, 1824, Bolívar's great lieutenant, Sucre, defeated the last Spanish Viceroy on the field of Ayacucho South America was free.

There are great names in this epic story besides those of Bolívar and San Martín, but these two stand supreme, as victors and organizers of victory; and Bolívar, at least, still eludes his biographer. That paradoxical genius, soldier, sage, and seer, still defies the analysis of the historian just as he bewildered, enraptured, astounded, and antagonized his contemporaries. When he died, in 1830, on the road to exile, his world, his ideal world, lay in ruins. His great Colombian Federation was already dissolving into its component parts. His still vaster plans for a Confederation of Spanish America had come to nothing. The Panama Congress, which was designed to lay the foundation for the realization of such an ideal, had failed, except in so far as it afforded an inspiration for a different, and distant, future. Many of the evils, the inevitable evils, which he had foreseen, had already befallen the countries which he had liberated. But the tremendous fact remained. The continent was free, and it was no longer closed. Brazil, that fortunate country, escaping the convulsions of her Spanish American neighbours, had moved from colony to independent empire; while of all Spain's vast dominions, from California to Cape Horn, there remained only the two islands of Cuba and Puerto Rico.

The Spanish American peoples won their own independence. Nothing can reduce the magnitude of that achievement. The story is an epic, with the Homeric qualities of that other epic, the conquest of the continent by the Spanish pioneers more than three hundred years before. But the peoples of Spanish America have been the first to recognize that the contribution from without their borders, though subordinate, was still considerable; and it was natural that the most powerful influence should have been exerted by the greatest commercial and maritime power in the world, Great Britain. The services of British volunteers on land and sea, the record of Lord Cochrane in Chile, and of the men of the English and Irish legions who served under Bolívar, have never been forgotten in Spanish America. And the assistance of British merchants and bankers was not less important.

It was not, of course, disinterested assistance. For to the British trader, in the years before and after Waterloo, the opening of a continent to British commerce came at a most fortunate time. It aroused the highest expectations, the rosiest dreams. The legend of the golden market replaced the legend of the golden man, and at no time, perhaps, has there been in England so eager a demand for information about Spanish America, and proportionately so liberal a supply, as in the years of emancipation. Books and pamphlets, travels and memoirs, poured from the press. It was even possible, in the eighteen-twenties, to found a periodical exclusively devoted to South American affairs. And it was now that a new migration of men and money from the Old World to the New began. British, and American, ships touched at every port. The continent was flooded with British goods. By 1824, there were at least eighty British firms with establishments in the coast towns of Latin America. By that date there were already three thousand Britons resident in Buenos Aires, while Valparaiso, in 1822, was said to be 'full of English, many of them of the lowest description and of the worst characters'. Englishmen and Scotsmen were interested in schemes for making gas and building docks, even for exporting milkmaids to Buenos Aires for making butter. These were the days of the early mining speculations and of the first South American loans, and by

1830, more than twenty million pounds sterling had been invested in Latin America in one way or another.

Much of this activity, of course, was purely speculative. Nor must it be supposed that the loans were made on the most generous terms, except, perhaps, to their promoters. But the effects, in services and supplies, were of great importance to the insurgents; and while the powerful motive of self-interest was here apparent, there was also another. Liberalism and commercial expansion were united in the nineteenth century, and both were on the side of the young republics. 'It is,' a Member of Parliament remarked in 1818, 'the interests of mankind . . . and it is particularly the interests of this fine commercial country that other countries should be free.' But it was the cause, as well as the profits, which so deeply stirred the imaginations of men. Not only Byron, but also Bentham, thought of settling in Venezuela.

But what of the attitude of the British Government as distinct from the private sympathies and operations of an influential segment of the British people? As Sir Charles Webster has pointed out, it was the essential service of British diplomacy to the infant states that Castlereagh should have removed the possibility of European intervention in Spanish America when the issue of independence was still in doubt. Great Britain, it is true, did not, in the years after 1808, actively promote, she did not even specifically desire, the independence of Spanish America. Like the Government of the United States she genuinely sought to uphold the correct principles of neutrality. She was prepared to mediate on liberal terms between Spain and her colonies. But she was not prepared to see the continent again closed to British trade. Nor was she prepared to tolerate intervention by the European Powers in Latin American affairs. Castlereagh's famous circular memorandum of August, 1817, was, indeed, a plain intimation that force should never be used against the American colonies by any other Power than Spain; and with that resolve on the part of the world's greatest naval Power, the independence of Spanish America was assured.

Once again, in 1823, when there were fears—groundless fears, as it turned out—of European intervention, Great

Britain, through the energy of Canning, secured from France, the only European Power that was potentially dangerous, a disavowal of any such intention; and it was now that preparations for the recognition of the Spanish American states began. The United States, after long hesitation, had taken earlier action. In 1822, the year in which Great Britain accorded recognition *de facto*, by recognizing the flags of South American vessels, the United States accorded recognition *de jure*; and, in December, 1823, the Monroe Doctrine was born.

The Monroe Doctrine, however, was for the future. It was to grow with the growth of the American nation. But it is safe to say that only a very few among European statesmen realized its supreme importance. They were shocked by what Metternich called Monroe's 'indecent declarations', but they were not greatly moved—except to indignation. British recognition of the new states in 1825 was an affair of different character. The public avowal by the greatest maritime power in the world that Spain's colonies were for ever lost was an event of world significance, and it evoked, as the Monroe Doctrine did not evoke, formal protests from the European courts.

This is not the place to discuss the remarkable similarities, and the profound differences, between British and American policies, nor the rivalry between Canning and John Quincy Adams, the greatest of American Foreign Secretaries. But one further point may be made. 'The great danger of the time,' wrote Canning, in 1825, 'was a division of the world into European and American, Republican and Monarchical; a league of worn-out Governments on the one hand, and of youthful and strong nations, with the United States at their head, on the other.' Time has only emphasized that repudiation of the division of the world into spheres, or hemispheres. More than a hundred years have passed. The freedom which the Spanish American states had won they were left to organize in their own way, without the interference of the outside world. The new states have grown into nations; and to-day, as almost never before, we realize that the problems of the New World and the problems of the Old are interdependent. They cannot be solved apart.

CANCIONERO POPULAR

Por ser la primera vez
que yo en esta casa canto,
gloria al Padre, gloria al Hijo,
gloria al Espíritu Santo.

Por ser la primera vez
que yo en esta casa canto,
me hago la cruz en la frente
para librarme de espanto.

Ayúdame guitarrita,
ayúdame cuatro cuerdas,
que quiero cantar ahora
para recordar mi tierra.

¿Pides un canto, querida?
pide más un gemido:
los pesares son el nido
donde mi alma se reclina.

Los pajarillos y yo
nos levantamos a un tiempo:
ellos a cantar sus dichas,
yo a llorar mis sentimientos.

Yo canto porque cantando
divierto los males míos;
cuando estoy a solas lloro,
y en conversación me río.

Si supiera que cantando
mis penas se distraían,
cantando me la pasara
toda la noche y el día.

The Popular Folk Songs are usually improvised and sung to the guitar by the LLANEROS (plainsmen). They are typical examples of Venezuelan folk songs and life and depict the contradictory traits of these LLANEROS. Their chief charm lies in their simplicity.

POPULAR FOLK SONGS

Since this is the first time
That I sing in this house,
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son
and to the Holy Ghost.

As this is the first time
That I sing in this house
I make the sign of the Cross
To keep away the evil one.

Help me my little guitar,
And also its four strings
As now I wish to sing
In order to remember my country. . . .

Do you ask for a song, beloved?
Ask rather for a sigh:
For sorrows are the nest
Where my soul is at rest.

The little birds and I
In the morning rise together,
They to sing their joys
I to cry my sorrows.

I sing because in singing
I lighten my unhappiness:
When I am alone I cry
But when I speak I laugh.

If you but knew that in singing
My troubles are forgotten,
So singing I shall pass
All night and all day.

(Translated by Miriam Blanco-Fombona.)

LATIN-AMERICAN STUDIES IN GREAT BRITAIN

WILLIAM C. ATKINSON

THE emancipation of Latin America from Spanish and Portuguese sovereignty is one of the decisive events of the modern world. The product, politically, of the American and French Revolutions, and to that extent of lesser doctrinal significance than these, it involved an area vastly greater and in the result—the emergence of not one but twenty new nations—was destined to alter the whole context of international relations. Canning, calling a new world into existence to redress the balance of the old, showed a rare prescience not merely of the tendency of modern wars to become global, but of the strategic significance of that one-seventh of the earth's surface which had so unexpectedly swum into his ken. His discreet diplomatic support was admirably if somewhat embarrassingly seconded by the rush of volunteers eager to strike another blow for freedom—of that embarrassment the Foreign Enlistment Bill of 1819 bears witness. 'Considering . . . that there was no battlefield in the War of Independence on which British blood was not shed . . . [and] that the British heroes who survived the epic struggle for liberty later incorporated themselves in the life of our democracies and through their austerity and love for order and institutions set the highest civic examples . . .': so runs a tribute to Britain of the Pan-American Centennial Congress of 1926. The reward we have reaped in full in our own day. Unimaginative as a people we may be, but little imagination is required for the appreciation of what it means to England and to mankind that in sentiment and conviction the peoples of the New World are, without exception, of our persuasion. Twice in a generation it has been demonstrated in war. Now, in peace, the peoples of Latin America constitute one-third of the membership of the United

Nations. Such, in barest outline, is the case for Latin-American studies in Great Britain.

Venezuela may claim a particular interest in the matter. As the original 'Tierra Firme', it was the Spanish conquistadores' first foothold on the mainland; and there, appropriately, where one set of European political doctrines began the subjugation of a continent, another, also from Europe, came three centuries later to light the torch of freedom. And not merely in geography is Venezuela set in a particular relationship to Europe. In 1527, the Augsburg banking-house of Welser was granted by Charles V, in return for moneys advanced to him, the right to conquer and colonize in Venezuela. The failure of that attempt at Germanization—it was abandoned after eighteen years—was a fortunate circumstance for Europe: already in the sixteenth century the New World may be seen playing a role in the balance of the Old. And with independence it is through Venezuela in the first place that intellectual and political links are forged with England.

When, in 1810, the first independent government in Latin America came into existence in Caracas, Bolívar, soon to be known to fame as the liberator of the New World, and Bello, who was to become its educator-in-chief, came to London as their country's first diplomatic representatives. There, among other things, they visited a Teachers' Training College, founded by the great educational reformer Joseph Lancaster, and were so impressed thereat that Bolívar invited Lancaster to visit and found schools in Venezuela, himself paying the expenses of the trip. That visit, reinforced shortly after by the labours of the Scotsman James Thomson, bore fruit far beyond Venezuela. Alike in Argentina, Uruguay, Chile, Peru, and Colombia, to the Lancastrian system falls the credit for the first serious attempt to found schools for the poor and to establish primary education on the grand scale. In his few months in London, Bolívar was able also to study in operation the British Constitution, which he afterwards commended to Venezuela as 'worthier than any other to serve as model to all who aspire to the enjoyment of the rights of man and to the maximum political happiness compatible with the frailty of human nature'. Bello stayed longer in Britain, some twenty

years of fruitful scholarship in the British Museum, and his two *Silvas americanas*, clarion-calls to the poets of the New World to abandon the over-sophistication of Europe in favour of a poetry specifically American in conception and content, were written for the pages of the two journals he founded in London. Later, as legal adviser on foreign affairs to the Government of Chile, reorganizer of that country's educational system and president of its National University, author of its Civil Code, and writer on philosophy and international law, he reveals the depth of his indebtedness to English thought.

With such past exemplars before us of cultural relations between Great Britain and the Hispanic nations beyond the Atlantic, and such present stimuli to the furthering thereof, the recent quickening of concern in this country that our schools and universities shall rise to the full height of post-war opportunities and responsibilities, provides a fitting occasion for a review of the national response to date to this particular challenge. The British Empire, said the cynic, was created in a fit of absence of mind; and the same element of the casual often attaches to Britain's conquest of the various realms of knowledge. The eloquent pleading of the late H. G. Wells for a systematic survey of all such realms will be remembered, and the polite interest, in lieu of action, it evoked. Britain has found nothing odd, to take an example, in the fact that would-be Celtic scholars should have to serve their apprenticeship in German universities. If pressed, we can do these things equally well, but so long as others choose to do them for us why, lacking inclination, should we? The result of this national idiosyncrasy has been a number of surprising gaps and a number of fortuitous developments in our range of studies. The present position of Spanish studies in this country derives from the collapse of Russia in 1917 and the consequent collapse of the brief enthusiasm for Russian which had arisen from the collapse, in 1914, of interest in German, on the very English theory that it was unpatriotic to study the language of the enemy. In 1917, our only chair of Portuguese was founded, with the support of the Portuguese Government, in London University. Portugal is our oldest ally, and the possessor still of one of the world's great empires, but that

chair has been in abeyance now for over a decade.¹ It is therefore in character that Latin-American studies, concerned with the better knowledge of an area of such vast present and potential importance to this country, should still be the Cinderella among our humanities, unrepresented by a chair in any British university. The omission is staggering. Citizens of the world, we think fit to ignore a continent and more, covering $8\frac{1}{2}$ million square miles, or two and a half times the size of Europe, and peopled by 125 million souls. Parliament authorizes the British Council to spend £3,000,000 a year on telling the rest of the world about this country. It being nobody's business to tell this country about the rest of the world, Latin America just got left out. Englishmen who have devoted themselves seriously to Latin-American studies over the past fifty years, it has been remarked, can be counted on one's fingers.

But another and no less striking idiosyncrasy of the Britisher is the casual way in which the amateur often steps into the breach. Remove the amateur from the long tale of British exploration—and scholarship is but the methodical exploration of countries of the mind—and the lustre thereof will be singularly diminished. We are in fact a curious people, curious to discover how other peoples, being not as we are, contrive to live; and when that curiosity moves us we prefer to go forth and find out for ourselves rather than direct our queries to official centres of information. So Southey, foiled in his dreams of the pantisocracy on the Susquehanna, transferred his curiosity from North to South America, and gave us the mighty torso of his *History of Brazil* (3 vols, 1810–19), to which Armitage's *History of Brazil from 1810 to 1831* (1836), the work of an English merchant resident in the far country, is a worthy pendant and one no less esteemed by Brazilians. And from Brazil too, down the nineteenth century, a long line of naturalists—Darwin, Wallace, Bates, Spruce—brought back vivid accounts of travels and researches that did much to reveal the country not only to England but to its inhabitants. Two names of our own day hold a peculiar place in the affection of Latin-Americans and in the annals of English prose: W. H.

¹ A new appointment to the chair has been announced since this article was written.

Hudson, born and brought up on the Argentine pampas, in whose *Far Away and Long Ago* (1918) many English readers will have received their first introduction to nature and society in the New World, and R. B. Cunningham Graham, who achieved spiritual naturalization among those same pampas, and whose inquiring mind and pen have contributed much to knowledge of the human factor in the evolution, under new skies, of new social patterns. Lord Bryce is a brilliant amateur of a different kind, the statesman whose powers of trained observation and analysis can cull a valuable harvest even from a wholly unfamiliar field. His *South America: Observations and Impressions* (1912), though the fruit of a mere four months' travel over a continent, is still a notable work of reference. A contemporary and more scientific counterpart is the collective Chatham House volume, *The Republics of South America* (1937).

But Latin-American studies cannot subsist on the observations, reminiscences, or biographical writings of a few individuals, however brilliant. The amateur by definition labours *con amore*. He studies what it pleases him to study, not what needs to be studied. He admits no obligation to see things objectively or as a whole. If there be anything in the rigorous intellectual discipline that goes to the making of the professional historian, linguist, or sociologist he will be the first to disclaim kinship, and as he asks to be read for interest rather than for profit, so he will expect in the critic his meed of indulgence. He is, finally, a phenomenon, emerging none can say when, nor why, and leaving no succession. The nation that needs knowledge in a given field, however productive that nation may be of the amateur, cannot rely on him. The basis of such studies must lie in our schools and universities.

The initial advantage is a very real one that Spanish should be the language not merely of Spain but of all the nations of Latin America save Brazil. This indeed, and not the educational attractions of the language as a school subject, lay behind its introduction, as already noted, during the first World War. *Modern Studies*, the report of a committee set up by the then Prime Minister in 1916 to inquire into the position of modern languages in this country, is explicit on the matter. 'Of the four languages [German, Italian, Spanish, Russian], Spanish has

perhaps the greatest commercial importance, owing to the size and growing wealth of the Spanish-speaking countries of Central and Southern America. We have had conclusive evidence of the damage suffered by British trade in America through British ignorance of Spanish.' That 'Spain has a striking and romantic history and a fine literature' was adduced by the committee as a secondary consideration. Language study at school, however, but lays the foundation for serious study of the country or countries in question, while the impossibility of establishing a linguistic norm for the Spanish of America concentrates attention automatically on Castilian and limits to Spanish literature the choice of reading matter. The secondary-school pupil who has studied this language will on leaving know something of Spanish, and ought to know something of Spain. He will very doubtfully know anything of Spanish America, and is in fact no more equipped for the furthering of useful relations with those countries than he is to do so with the United States from the accident of knowing English.

The position is other in the universities, where command of a foreign language, far from an end in itself, is merely the gateway to knowledge of a foreign people, its way of life, and its heritage. There are now six chairs of Spanish in British universities, and at most one or two universities where there is not a Department of Spanish Studies. Language and literature are their primary concern, but language and literature in themselves are but functions of the corporate experience of a people, and become meaningless when divorced from their historical background. It is one of the peculiar attractions of Spanish studies that the student is gradually impelled to make his interests co-extensive with the fullest interpretation of the term Hispanic. Spain is a delusive concept, suggesting a unity that is not. There was a time when the Christian kingdoms of the medieval Peninsula were all foreigners one to another, and the only 'Hispani' were the Muslims. Of those kingdoms, Portugal emerged to permanent independence, while Catalonia was to lose an independence of much earlier date. A woman's whim had more to do with this than predestination. Had Isabella the Catholic not preferred her Aragonese to her

Portuguese suitor the situation would have been reversed. But, independent or absorbed, Portugal and Catalonia are integral parts, with Castile, of one civilization, and Spanish studies cannot omit them from their field of reference.

And if history keeps breaking through in this manner, no study of the Peninsula and the Peninsular spirit can ignore their greatest collective manifestation, the epic of the discovery, conquest, and colonization of the new world across the South Atlantic. Vital to the history of Spain, its repercussions are interwoven in the whole fabric of later Spanish literature, down to modernism and the 'generation of 1898' and beyond. But it is clearly not possible for the student of Spain to concern himself merely with the repercussions of Latin America in the mother-country. The study of a literature, as of any other aspect of a nation's culture and civilization, is a study in space as well as in time. It embraces its development both down the centuries and over such territories as have at any period nurtured its writers and thinkers or shared in its cultural tradition. Much of early Spanish Renaissance drama was written in Italy. Spain's balladry must be followed to North Africa and the Balkans. Camoens began the *Lusadas* in India. Spain and Portugal alike transplanted to American soil, with their religion, their speech, and their social organization, their literary culture, and the story of how this took root and fructified is at once a chapter in the record and something more. For from the differential qualities of the American product we may learn to distinguish between what is basic, quintessential in the Peninsular mind and soul, going deeper than the soil, and what is peculiarly the result of soil and environment, wilting or suffering a sea-change when these are altered. The subtle nuances that distinguish the Mexican Alarcón, writing in Madrid, from the other masters of seventeenth-century Spanish comedy, are in themselves a contribution to the better understanding of this.

On these considerations there follows straightway the larger and still more obvious one that Latin America has much to offer that is deserving of study in its own right. With political emancipation there came, moreover, such a radical change in the relations between the erstwhile colonies and the Peninsula

that subsequent literature, differing both in kind and in quality from the old, demands a very different approach. A number of our universities have already recognized the implications of this and have sought to make provision therefor. Interest in Latin America, no less than in Spain, lay behind the first endowment, in 1916, of a School of Spanish at Cambridge, and there, both for the Ordinary Degree and in the Tripos, the modern history and economic conditions of Latin America find a place. This was the chosen field of Mr. F. A. Kirkpatrick, University Reader in Spanish till 1933, whose *History of the Argentine Republic* (1933) and *Latin America, a Brief History* (1938) are standard works on both sides of the Atlantic. The same author's *The Spanish Conquistadores* (1934) is perhaps the best one-volume account in any language of the conquest as one great movement. The latest contribution of British Hispanism to Latin-American studies comes again from Cambridge, Professor J. B. Trend's *Bolívar and the Independence of Spanish America* (1946). The endowment in 1926 of a Chair of Spanish at Oxford University was in part, as will be remembered, an act of commemoration of the visit to South America of the then Prince of Wales, and the first volume to appear under the auspices of the Chair was, appropriately, the late Cecil Jane's *Liberty and Despotism in Spanish America* (1929), which goes straight to the heart of the conflict that is writ so large over the destinies of the New World. The first holder of the Oxford Chair, D. Salvador de Madariaga, has himself enriched the field with his notable studies of *Columbus* (1939) and *Hernán Cortés* (1941); while his successor, Professor W. J. Entwistle, pursued to both Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking America, in his *The Spanish Language* (1936), the linguistic consequences of Peninsular expansion. In the Honours School of Modern Languages at Oxford Latin America is represented by options both of prescribed authors and of special subjects. At London University interest in the New World is again chiefly historical. Professor C. K. Webster's *Britain and the Independence of Latin America, 1812-1830* (2 vols., 1938) is an invaluable source-book from Foreign Office archives. *The Evolution of Modern Latin America* (1946), by Dr. R. A. Humphreys, Reader in American History, is an admirable introduction to

the complexities of the political, social, and economic scene. From the same pen had come earlier an annotated *Bibliography of Latin America* (1941).

Among the other universities, Liverpool, Glasgow, and Durham call for mention. Liverpool not only possessed the only chair of Spanish in the British Isles dating from before the first World War (1909): it is the home also of the only British journal in this field, the quarterly *Bulletin of Spanish Studies*, now in its twenty-fourth year, and still under the direction of its founder, Professor E. Allison Peers. In its first issue the *Bulletin* announced as part of its purpose 'to keep readers in touch with the great world of Latin America', and that undertaking it has fulfilled with a steady flow of articles and book-reviews which have, incidentally, won for it recognition throughout the length and breadth of the New World. For the past three years there has, further, appeared in its pages an annual review of Latin-American affairs, country by country, which will be of lasting reference value. This width of interests is represented in the work of the Spanish School, where Spanish-American history, literature, and institutions have recently been expanded from a one-year to a four-years' course (separate provision being made for Brazil), so that in future practically every candidate reading for Spanish Honours at Liverpool will study this subject for four years. In Glasgow, where the Chair of Spanish was endowed in 1926 by a private benefactor with a particular interest in Latin America, the scope of Spanish studies has from the beginning been held to extend to the confines of the Hispanic world. Courses in Latin-American literature were thus a natural complement to others in Catalan and Portuguese, although not until 1946, with the creation of the first lectureship specifically in Latin-American studies in any British university, was it possible to do justice to the prescription. In the same year the Lectureship in Spanish at Newcastle-on-Tyne, in the University of Durham, was recreated as a Readership in Spanish and Latin-American Studies.

If one World War led to the firm establishment of Spanish studies in this country, a second has therefore been followed by a definite acceptance of Latin America's claim to academic

attention. Any statement of what has been done would, however, be gravely misleading which failed to focus attention no less on how much is left to do. There remains a third and still more important stage which, it is to be hoped, will not have to wait for achievement on a third World War. It is better that Latin America should be studied as an appendix to Spanish studies than that it should not be studied at all. But there is more than inadequacy here: there is a flouting of reality, and of psychology, that should give cause for national concern. Twenty countries, each with a history, a literature, and a range of social and economic problems of its own, cannot be accommodated within a department of study dominated by Spain, quite apart from the fallacy that everything in these countries is to be explained by reference to the Peninsular heritage. Their collective—and even, in the case of the larger among them, their individual—importance to the modern world is of a different order from that of Spain. And if we wish to reach to understanding of them, and to achieve a reciprocal comprehension and esteem, we must begin by recognizing the basic reality, that Latin America emerged from colonial status over a century ago and is long since become of age. There is doubtfully any more urgent need in the Arts faculties of our universities to-day—or, we would suggest, one more self-evident—than an independent chair or chairs of Latin-American Studies. Let anyone consider the provision made in this respect in the universities of the United States and ask himself whether Britain can afford, on grounds of the highest self-interest no less than of knowledge, to lag so far behind.

WILLIAM C. ATKINSON, a Stevenson Professor of Spanish in the University of Glasgow, was from 1939-43 Head of the Spanish and Portuguese Section of the Foreign Office Research Department. In 1946 he was the British Council Lecturer to Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina, Chile, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, and Mexico. He is a frequent broadcaster in the B.B.C.'s Spanish and Latin-American services.

TWO POETS

NIÑO CAMPESINO

by MIGUEL OTERO SILVA

‘La choza enclenque y parda lo acunaba en su puerta
con el orgullo ingenuo de las ramas torcidas
que balanceaban al viento la flor que les nació.

Era un niño terroso que miraba al barranco.
Era un niño harapiento
con los ojos inmutables del indio
y los rasgos ariscos del negro.
Uno cualquiera de los cien mil niños
que nacen en las chozas marchitas de mi tierra.

Yo me detuve ante la puerta
y el niño de la choza
arrancó su mirada impasible del barranco
para fijarla en mí.

Yo le dije:
— ¿Estás solo?
Y él habló con la voz cadenciosa del indio:
— Las flores del barranco son amigas.

(Era un niño poeta.
Yo lo había presentado en los ojos profundos).
— ¿Pero no tienes miedo?
Y él habló con la voz jactanciosa del negro:
— Yo soy el macho, ¿sabe?
Mi hermanita se jué con mamá a cortar leña.

(Era un niño valiente.
Yo lo había presentado en los rasgos audaces).

THE COUNTRY CHILD

by MIGUEL OTERO SILVA

The drab, tumbledown hut, the door, framed him
with that candid pride of those twisted branches
that in the wind rock the flower that was born to them.

It was a child the colour of earth who gazed at the precipice
He was a ragged child
with the immutable eyes of the Indian,
with the stubborn features of the negro:
merely one of the thousand children
who are born in the withered huts of my country.

I stopped in front of the door,
and the child of the hut
tore his impassive gaze from the precipice
in order to fix it on me.

I said to him:
'Are you alone?'
And he spoke in the
harmonious voice of the Indian:
'The flowers of the precipice are my friends.'

(He was a child poet.
I had had a presentiment of it from his profound eyes.)

'But are you not afraid?'
And he spoke in the boastful voice of the negro:
'I am the male, you know?
My little sister has gone with my Mother to cut wood.'

(He was a brave child:
I had had a presentiment of it from his audacious features.)

Después le hablé del palpitante del río,
 del verde hecho ternura en la hondonada
 y del verde bravío de la montaña.
 El me dijo que amaba el silbido del viento
 y el azul valeroso de los cielos desnudos
 y el canto y el plumaje de los pájaros.

(Era un niño Pintor,
 o músico,
 o poeta).

Sirvióme agua de la tinaja grande
 y cuando me marchaba
 me tendió la sonrisa fraterna de los negros.

Y se quedó mirando su paisaje
 y aferrado a la choza
 como la flor del árbol

Yo descendí la cuesta
 desbandando mi palomar de angustias
 por niños poetas,
 por los niños pintores,
 por los niños artistas,
 que nacen en las chozas de mi tierra
 y se quedan mirando las barrancos
 para toda la vida.

Por la obra que nunca ha de nacer
 porque están en el mundo con las manos cortadas
 esos niños terrosos de las chozas marchitas.'

MIGUEL OTERO SILVA belongs to a young and important group of 'socialist' poets. Born in 1908, Barcelona, Venezuela. During the tyranny of Gomez he took part in several revolutionary movements, and was imprisoned and exiled. His poetry is virile and very human. He has published several volumes of verse, and is one of the chief protagonists of Venezuela's younger poets.

THE COUNTRY CHILD

Afterwards I spoke of the rhythm of the river,
of the soft green earth in the dale
and the wild green of the mountain.
He told he loved the whistling of the wind,
the brave blue of the cloudless skies,
the song and the feathers of the birds.—

(He was a painter
or a musician
or a poet.)

He poured me water from the large earthen jar
and when I was going
he gave me the brotherly smile of the negro.

And he remained gazing at the countryside
rooted to the hut
like the flower to the tree.

I walked down the hill
sorrowing
for those children who are poets
for those children who are painters
for those children who are artists
for those children who are born in the huts of my country
and remain gazing at the precipice all their lives.

Because those masterpieces will never be born,
since they live in the world bereft of civilization
those earth-coloured children of the withered huts.

(Translated by Miriam Blanco-Fombona.)

LA CARRETA

by JACINTO FOMBONA PACHANO

La carreta
del malojero,
salió muy de mañana,
por el sendero
al par de la campana.

Y alegre y crujidora
la carreta del malojero
al marchar parecía cargar la aurora.
Y fue que en el sendero,
la carreta del malojero,
se tropezó con la campiña,
de talle perfumado y mañanero,
bajo sus bucles verdes, como una niña. . . .

Y oyó decir a la campiña
de bucles verdes:
— Quiero
que me lleves contigo por el sendero.
Cargó entonces con ella,
la carreta del malojero,
como se carga una doncella.

Así llegó hasta el caserío,
fresca de aurora la campiña
con su cuerpo mojado por el rocío
y sus verdes bucles de niña.

Y esto lo celebraron esa mañana
el burrito de carga y la campana.

JACINTO FOMBONA PACHANO, born in Caracas, Venezuela, 1901, is a poet of extraordinary sensibility. He writes very pure Spanish and is notable for his imaginative and spiritual poems. He was one of the Venezuelan poets who opposed the tyranny of Gomez. Since the death of Gomez he has held various important official posts, and is Editor of several magazines.

THE CART OF THE MAIZE GLEANER

by JACINTO FOMBONA PACHANO

The cart
of the maize gleaner
was out very early
on the path,
to the sound of the bell.

And bright and creaking
the cart of the maize gleaner
seemed to carry the very dawn as it went along.
It happened on the pathway
that the cart of the maize gleaner
came across a field
that was filled with the scent of the dawn
with its green curls of maize, like those of a child.

And it heard the field say
with the green curls of maize:
 I want you
to take me with you on the pathway.
Then the cart of the maize gleaner
was filled with green maize,
and carted it was
in the same way it carries a young country lass.

Thus it reached the village
fresh with the dawn of the country,
its body wet with dew
and its girlish green curls of maize.—

And that morning this was celebrated
by the little donkey and the bell.

(Translated by Miriam Blanco-Fombona.)

ANDRÉS BELLO

LUIS CABANA

ON the 17th July, 1810, the Marquis of Wellesley received a visit from Simón Bolívar, the first Latin-American representative accredited in England. A few months later, in April of the same year, a 'Junta' (Council) had assembled in Caracas with the object of carrying on the Government 'in the name of Fernando the Seventh' as long as the Peninsula remained in the power of the French. One of the first concerns of this Council was to send to Great Britain a diplomatic mission. In order to make it completely representative Simón Bolívar and Luis López Méndez were chosen. Don Andrés Bello went as Secretary and Auxiliary.

Thus, at the very outbreak of the struggle for Latin-American Independence, Bolívar, the greatest of the leaders, and Bello, the greatest man of letters of the new nations, once more found themselves reunited. The friendship which existed between these two men dated back some time, and Bello had taught Bolívar in his youth geography and literature in all its branches. 'He was my master,' wrote Bolívar afterwards, 'when we were the same age, and I loved him and respected him.' But the association of these two men did not last long. Bolívar went back to America with López Méndez, to initiate the bloody struggle which was to last for fifteen years. Andrés Bello remained in London.

In that period Andrés Bello was already an outstanding figure. In spite of the widespread opinion that the Spanish Inquisition was exercising in the American colonies an impenetrable spiritual tyranny, yet in some of the young colonial societies the manifestations of culture had already achieved notable progress. In Caracas, the study of the Classics and of general literature, as well as of music, had already a number of devotees. Outstanding amongst them was Bello as a poet of merit and as the first of the Latinists.

Venezuela held at that time an enviable position, when

compared with the other colonies. Along its vast coastline on the Caribbean Sea, facing the British and Dutch Antilles, smuggling was not confined to the introduction into the country of merchandise and slaves, but it was also the channel through which flowed a stream of all the new ideas and new books. In this manner, the Venezuelan intellectuals were kept well-informed of the march of ideas in the world.

Bello spent the following twenty-five years in London; whilst war swept through the American countries destroying everything, he devoted himself in the British capital to study and work. On various occasions he acted as Secretary to the Legations of Colombia and Chile. He studied sedulously in the London libraries, especially in that of the British Museum, and, in order to supplement his meagre salaries, he gave lessons or assisted in deciphering the incomprehensible manuscripts of Jeremy Bentham.

About that period (1810-1820) there moved in the British capital a fostered group of literary emigrants. They were Americans driven out of the colonies by the war, and Spaniards also, in considerable numbers and of good class, affiliated to the liberal party, which in Spain was striving against absolute Monarchy. They were all rivals in their ambition to achieve literary glory, and in order to publish their works they brought out Reviews in Spanish. One of these, the *Biblioteca Americana*, appeared from time to time throughout 1823, and under the title of *Repertorio Americano* it was published again in 1826 and 1827. Of both Reviews Bello was the assiduous and chief editor, and in its pages he published numerous literary and philological essays.

During these years a curious phenomenon is working within Bello. He always had been and always was a staunch supporter of the growing force of European culture in America. To it they attributed the conformation of his intellectual classical tendencies and, up to a certain point even his political opinions. But his protracted stay in Great Britain, in close contact with original sources of this culture, far from confirming in him the European conception of life, threw him into the arms of his far-off America. The years that Bello spent in London were his best years as a poet, and in the unfolding

of this poetry one is manifestly aware of his growing power. America, in its twofold aspect of Spanish and virgin land, revealed to his eyes its true importance as a land of reality and promise: his verses assumed native colouring. The 'Silvas americanas', the loftiest and most unique of his poems, appeared at that time. They are songs to the new life upon the new soil, in which the tropical countries and their peoples, their native fruits, and their exotic flowers, exist with apt and independent dignity.

Nevertheless, during that period and for a long time after, Bello was not able to give full expression to his American characteristics. The circumstance of having discharged during his early manhood duties in the colonial administration took on exaggerated proportions when seen with eyes blinded by political passion. The tendency which actuated Bello to preserve as far as was prudent the positive and creative part of the work and thoughts which were essentially Spanish in the new nations, was a serious offence from the point of view of those who, with a more unbiased or empiric romanticism, regard as more American ideals and systems which are more remote in reality from race and environment.

Life became hard and difficult during those years, and Bolívar himself, in April of 1829, deeply deplored the situation which compelled Bello to withdraw from the service of the Republic, leaving the office of administration which he held in the Legation.

On receiving the news that the poet is preparing to emigrate to Chile, the Liberator writes to a common friend: 'Do persuade Bello . . . his country should come before everything, and that he is worthy of occupying a very important place in it.' The effort was fruitless. When Bello left London in 1829, in order to take up permanent residence in Chile, the third and most brilliant period of his life began. The bitter experience of nineteen years of exile is comprised in the following phrase, from a letter written to a friend on the eve of his departure, 'I look forward impatiently to to-morrow, to leave this city: for so many reasons hateful to me, and yet for so many others worthy of my affection.'

Adaptation to the new surroundings was difficult, and Bello

missed not only the cultured circle with which he was in contact in London, but even the kindly literary friends of the colony of Caracas. Impelled by this feeling of homesickness, he gave himself up wholeheartedly to teaching, a field in which his very extensive knowledge found the most varied occupations. Thirteen years afterwards he was nominated Rector of the University of Santiago.

During this time Bello keeps rather aloof from contact with the Muses, but his hard work as lawyer and philologist profits thereby. Already during his stay in London he had begun to take up judicial studies, especially International Law, and from the year 1834 until 1855, he carried out the duties of Chief Official and Assessor for the Ministry of External Affairs in Chile. Already in 1833, he published his *Tratado de Derecho de Gentes* ('Treatise of International Law'), perhaps the first work on the subject that has appeared in Latin-America.

But it was in the *Proyecto de Código Civil* ('Scheme of Code of Civil Laws'), the Preliminary Title of which appeared for the first time in 1841, that Bello attained to his most lofty expression as a lawyer. The Code, dedicated as Chilean law in 1853, was in a certain degree, in the juridical field, the continuation of the tendency, which, years before, had occupied a place in the 'Silvas americanas'. It requires a mighty effort to save from the avalanche of modern legal ideas—European but not Spanish—everything useful and adaptable to race and to environment which could be found in the old Peninsular Codes and in the particular 'Letjes de Indias'. Throughout this legal treatise of his there is evidence of a steadfast undertaking, well served by the wide scope of the author's talents, to conserve, perfect, and codify principles of proved efficiency, or customs of rigid American origin. The Code is still in force to-day, with modifications, in various countries of Latin-America, and the spirit of it has influenced profoundly the legislation of the Continent.

Not only did Bello try to give laws to the new Republic, but, carrying on the learned and profound philological studies which he had already begun in London, he published in 1847, *Grammar of the Spanish Language for the use of Americans*. 'I have had no wish,' he writes in the prologue of the work, 'to rely

upon authorities, because in my opinion the only unchallengeable thing relating to a language is the language itself.' Bello regarded idiom as a live organism, and tried to compile a Grammar strictly Spanish, reacting against the latinizing tendency of the Royal Spanish Academy, whose authority till then had been almost absolute on the subject, 'disencumbering the language from certain latin traditions, which are in no way adaptable to it.'

The 'Grammar' is without doubt the most absolute glory amongst all the achievements of Bello. His teachings made a profound mark in the Spanish-speaking world. The name of Bello stands out as one of the first amongst Spanish philologists.

Bello kept up his perpetual activities almost to the time of his death, which occurred in 1865. When it arrives, it finds him surrounded by the affection and the respect of a nation, which, since his arrival, more than thirty years before, reckoned him amongst the number of its fellow-citizens. However, he still maintained in entirety his love and veneration for Venezuela, his native ancestral home: 'Nature gives us one mother only, and she gives one country only,' Bello sings in one of his last poems. By his spirit, by his work, and by his transcendental teachings, Bello is the highest intellectual figure in Latin-America, and his glory belongs to the whole of it.

DR. CABANA is Counsellor at the Venezuelan Embassy in London.

THE SPECTRE OF LA BARQUERENA

RÓMULO GALLEGOS

(Chapter 10 from *Doña Barbara*)

COVERING a vast depression in the grassy plain was a forest of *maporas*, deep and misty, which went by the name of the small blue stork that according to an ancient legend was sometimes found in the vicinity: the only inhabitant of the place. It was a cursed spot: an all-pervading silence, palm-trees scorched by the sun's rays, and in the centre a quagmire which spelt death by muddy suction to any living being which attempted to cross it.

The small crane after which it was named, according to the legend, was the unshriven soul of an Indian, daughter of the *cacique* (chieftain) of a *yarura* community which lived there when Evaristo Luzardo had first trekked with his herds into the bowl of Aragua. A man of prey, the invader has dispossessed the Indians of their natural right, and when they tried to defend their property, had exterminated them with blood and fire. The *cacique*, at the sight of his hovels reduced to ruins, cursed the palmgrove so that from it the trespasser and his descendants might only reap ruin and affliction, victims of lightning, prophesying that it would return to the power of the *yaruras* when a member of this tribe salvaged from the earth a thunderbolt of the spell.

According to the fable, the curse had been fulfilled, for not only had there never been in the district a storm which had not spewed thunderbolts over the palmgrove, killing on some occasions whole herds of cattle belonging to the Luzardos, but it had also been the cause of the discord which had eventually destroyed the family. As regards the prophecy, until the time of Santos's father, it was popularly said that, after these storms, an Indian could always be seen—goodness knows

where he had come from—burrowing in the earth in search of the meteorite.

But for some years the *yarure* had not appeared. Perhaps, over amid their hovels, the tradition had been lost. In Altamira no one admitted to believe in the legend, but everyone preferred to make a long detour rather than cross the evil place.

Santos rode round the quagmire over the black slimy terrain which, echoing under the horse's hooves, was traversable without risk. Around the deathly lagoon, the earth was festooned with young grass, but in spite of its freshness, so pleasant to the eye, something sombre surrounded the place, and instead of the crane of the legend, a solitary stork on an island of vegetation accentuated the graveyard silence.

Santos was engrossed in his immediate purpose, when his attention was drawn by something which moved on the border of his field of vision and made him turn his head. It was a girl, dishevelled and clad in filthy rags, carrying a bundle of fagots on her head, and trying to hide behind a palm-tree.

'You there!' he shouted, reining in his horse. 'Can you tell me the direction of Lorenzo Barquero's house?'

'Don't you know?' answered the girl, grunting like an untamed beast.

'Of course not. That's why I ask.'

'Huh. And that roof showing through the trees there, what do you think that is?'

'You could have told me that at the beginning,' said Santos, continuing his journey.

A miserable dwelling-place, half lean-to and half hovel, the latter formed by four walls of plasterless mud and straw, and a door without jambs, and the former by an equal number of forked poles which held up the remainder of the black and threadbare roof of palm-leaves, from which hung a filthy hammock: this was the house of the 'Spectre of La Barquereña, the name by which Lorenzo Barquero was known in those parts.

Through having seen him once in his childhood, Santos barely retained a vague memory of his likeness, but however

clear this might have been, he would not have recognized it in the man who stood up in the hammock at the sound of his arrival.

Horribly thin and emaciated, in truth a physical wreck, grey-haired, he had the appearance of an old man, though he can only have been forty years of age. His long and fleshless hands trembled continually, and in the depths of his greenish-black pupils was a gleam of insanity. His head was bent forward, as if he carried a yoke on his neck; his features, and in fact the attitude of his whole body, revealed a profound undermining of the will, and his mouth was deformed by the ravages of unremitted drinking. In a cavernous voice and with a visible effort, he asked,

'To whom have I the pleasure . . .?'

The visitor had already dismounted, and after tying his horse to one of the poles, approached, saying,

'I am Santos Luzardo, and I come to offer you my friendship.'

But implacable hatred still burned within this human ruin.

'A Luzardo in the house of a Barquero?'

Santos saw him tremble and waver, searching perhaps for a weapon, but he drew near and held out his hand.

'Let us be reasonable, Lorenzo. It would be absurd for us to persist in maintaining this regrettable family feud. I, because in fact I do not hold it, and you . . .'

'Because I am no longer a man? Isn't that what you were about to say?' he asked, with the uncertainty of a failing brain.

'No, Lorenzo. Such a thought had not crossed my mind,' Luzardo answered, a feeling of real compassion gripping him, though he had until then only been moved by a desire to end this family feud.

But Lorenzo insisted:

'Yes, yes, that is what you were going to say . . .'

Until that moment his voice had been hoarse and his attitude aggressive. Suddenly he became weaker, as if he had

used up in this attempt at ostentation what little energy he had left, and he continued in a different voice, dull, painful, and with a more pronounced stammer.

'You are right, Santos Luzardo. I am no longer a man. I am the shadow of a man no longer living. Do what you will with me.'

'I have already told you: I come to offer you my friendship. To put myself at your service for anything in which I may be able to help. I have come to take possession of Altamira, and . . .'

But Lorenzo interrupted, placing skeleton-like hands on Santos's shoulders, by exclaiming:

'You too, Santos Luzardo. You too heard the call? We were all of us fated to hear it!'

'I don't understand. What call?'

And as Lorenzo didn't loosen his hold or shift his deliriously fixed stare, nor was it possible either to bear the odour of digested alcohol any longer, he added:

'But you haven't yet asked me to sit down.'

'True. Wait a moment. I will bring out a chair.'

'I can fetch one, don't you bother,' he said, noticing the vacillation in his walk.

'No, stay out here. You can't go inside. I don't want you to enter. This isn't a house: it's the den of a beast.'

And he went inside, bending over even more to clear the low lintel.

Before getting the chair which he was to offer his guest, he went up to a table at the back of the room, on which was a decanter with an inverted glass over it.

'I beg you not to drink, Lorenzo,' Santos said, approaching the door.

'Just a sip, no more. Let me have one sip. I need it just now. I don't offer you one because it is wood alcohol. But, if you want . . .'

'Thanks. I don't drink.'

'You soon will then.'

An evil smile crossed the fleshless features of this caricature of manhood, while his hands knocked the glass against the decanter. When Santos saw the quantity of spirit which he poured out, he tried to stop him, but the pestilent air in the room was so overpowering that he was unable to cross the doorstep. Anyway Lorenzo had already raised the glass to his lips and was swallowing the contents hurriedly. Then, like a child who hasn't yet learned to use his hands, he wiped his whiskers with his forearm, took hold of a stool and a chair with a greasy raw-hide seat, and came out saying:

'So, a Luzardo in the house of a Barquero. And the two still alive. The only ones left!'

'I beg you to . . .'

'No. You have already told me. I know. . . . The Luzardo comes not to kill and the Barquero offers the best accommodation he has: this chair. Sit down. And he sits on this stool. Thus.'

The seat, which was very low, obliged him to bend his legs and rest his arms on his knees, his trembling hands hanging loose, in a grotesque position which made even more repulsive his miserable physique. His only clothing was a filthy pair of trousers of the type open at the sides down to the knee, and a striped vest with holes in it, which let the hairs of his chest come through.

At the sight of that repugnant ruin, Santos had a momentary feeling of fatalistic terror. That which he saw before him had been a man in whom were lodged pride, hope, and love.

In order to do something which would justify his talking without looking at Lorenzo, he took out a cigarette, and while he lit it, said:

'This is the second time we meet, Lorenzo.'

'The second?' he asked, with an expression of painful mental effort. 'Do you mean that we already know one another?'

'Yes. Many years ago now. I was perhaps eight.'

Lorenzo straightened himself suddenly to answer:

'Me in your house? It was the time before the beginning of . . .'

'Yes. And in my home, the same as in yours, everyone was full of praise for you—for your great intelligence—which was the pride of the family.'

'My intelligence?' asked Lorenzo, as if he was talking of something completely unknown. 'My intelligence!' he repeated once and again, drawing his hands over his head with a tortured expression, and finally fixing Santos with a suppliant look, 'why do you come to talk to me about that? . . .'

'A sudden memory I had,' answered Santos, hiding his intention to provoke in that degraded spirit a healthy reaction. 'I was a child, but on the strength of hearing how you were praised by everyone in the family, and especially mother, who always had the words "Emulate Lorenzo" on her lips whenever she wanted to encourage me, I had formed of you the highest conception possible in the head of an eight-year-old. I didn't know you, but my thoughts were always of "that cousin who was studying to be a doctor in Caracas", and there were no words, manners, or gestures of yours I heard mentioned, which I didn't immediately try to imitate, nor can I remember in my childhood a stronger emotion than that which I felt the day my mother said: "Come to meet your cousin Lorenzo." I can reconstruct the scene: you asked me the three or four questions which are usual when being introduced to a child, and father told you—no doubt with the pride of a dweller on these plains—that I was "good on horseback". You answered with a long discourse, which seemed to me heavenly music, not only because I didn't understand it, but because the words, being yours, were for me eloquence itself. Nevertheless I can remember one of your phrases: "It is necessary to stifle the centaur which all us *llaneros* (plainsmen) carry within us." I of course didn't know what a centaur was, nor for the life of me could imagine why we plainsmen carried it inside us, but I liked the phrase so much that—I must tell you this—my first attempts at oratory—for all *llaneros*, men of a forthright race, have in some way a taste for eloquence—were made on this model: "it is necessary to kill the centaur," which I declaimed, when by myself, without understanding a syllable of what I was saying, of course, and without being

able to go any further. It is unnecessary to say that I had already heard of your fame as an orator.'

He stopped, apparently to flick the ash off his cigarette, but in reality to allow Lorenzo to show the effect these words produced in him. Some reaction they had caused, for he showed signs of great agitation, drawing his hands over his forehead to the back of his head with tormented gesture, and Santos, satisfied with his work, went on:

'Years later, in Caracas, I happened to come across a pamphlet of a speech delivered on some national holiday, and imagine my astonishment when I found in it your famous phrase. Do you remember the occasion? The theme was, "The centaur is barbarism and one must do away with it." I learned then that developing your theory, which proclaimed a more useful orientation of our national history, you had provoked a scandal among the traditionalists, and I had the satisfaction of proving that your ideas had marked the beginning of an epoch in the appreciation of the history of our independence. I was able at that time to understand the thesis, and I felt and thought as you did. Something had to remain after I had repeated it so often, don't you think?'

But Lorenzo only clutched his head with trembling hands, under which suddenly was unleashed a storm of recollections.

His brilliant youth, a future of great promise, the hopes which had been pinned on him. Caracas . . . the University . . . the pleasures, the flattery of success, the admiration of friends, a woman who loved him, everything that can make life appetizing. His studies, about to be crowned by his graduation as a doctor of medicine, an aura of sympathy propitious for a well-deserved triumph, possession of unusual intelligence, and, suddenly, the call! the fatal reclamation of barbarism, in the handwriting of his mother. 'Come. Yesterday José Luzardo murdered your father. Come to revenge him.'

'Do you understand now why I can't feel myself your enemy!' Santos Luzardo finished, offering a helping hand to the soul which battled to rise from the abyss. 'You were the object of my admiration as a child; you helped me afterwards indirectly, but very usefully, because many of the facilities which I found in Caracas, during my life as a student and in

my social relations, were due to the affection felt towards you, and, lastly, as regards spiritual guidance, I have a sacred debt to you: in trying to imitate you, I acquired noble aspirations.'

The tremendous sarcasm which circumstances gave to these well-intentioned words eventually exasperated their pitiable hearer. He rose suddenly from the curved posture caused by the weight of his miseries and torments, and rushed headlong towards the door of the room. Very soon afterwards the tinkling of the decanter against the glass was heard, held in trembling hands, and Santos murmured:

'It is useless. This unfortunate man has nothing left to him but the oblivion of drunkenness.'

He was already preparing to leave, when Lorenzo appeared, with a firmer step and a more intelligent look in his face, galvanized by the whiplash of alcohol.

'No. You can't go yet: you must listen to me. You have already spoken, and now it is my turn. Sit down and hear what I must reply.'

'Leave it for another day, Lorenzo. I will come here often to talk to you.'

'No. It must be now. I beg you to listen,' and then, violently, 'No, I don't beg you, I order you to hear me. You have come here to provoke me, and now you must listen.'

'All right, man, I will do what you want,' acceded Santos, tolerantly. 'I am sitting down again. Say all you wish.'

'Yes, I will speak. I will speak, at last! What a wonderful thing it is to be able to speak, Santos Luzardo!'

'But have you no one to speak to? Don't you live with your daughter?'

'Don't talk to me now of my daughter. Don't you talk. Only listen. Thus. Yes . . . Look at me well, Santos Luzardo. This spectre of a man which was, this human bag of bones, this carrion which speaks to you, was your ideal. I was that which you have just told me about, and now I am this which you see. Doesn't it frighten you, Santos Luzardo?'

'Frighten me, why?'

'No! I don't question so that you should answer, but that you should listen to my story: that Lorenzo Barquero which you have told me about was nothing but a lie: the truth is what you see now. You too are a lie that will soon evaporate. This earth doesn't pardon. You also have heard the call of this devourer of men. I will yet see you fall into her arms. When she opens them again, you will be nothing but a worn-out parody. Look at her! Mirages everywhere: one there; another there. The plain is full of mirages. Is it my fault that you should have built up an illusion that a Luzardo—a Luzardo, mind you, because I too am one, even though it hurts me—could be an example to men? But we are not alone, Santos. This comfort remains to us. I have known many men—as you have too, I am sure—who in their twenties gave great future promise. Let them get into their thirties: they are done for, they fade away. They were mirages of the tropics. But listen to this: I was never mistaken about myself. I knew that all that others admired in me was merely a lie. I discovered it through one of my greatest triumphs during my student life: an examination for which I had not properly prepared. I had to expound on a subject of which I was completely ignorant, but I started to talk, and the words, just plain words, did the trick. I not only got a good mark, I was praised by my examiners. Scoundrels! From that time I began to observe that my intelligence—that which everybody called my great talent—only started to function while I was talking. As soon as I was silent the mirage vanished and I knew nothing about anything. I felt the lie of my intelligence and of my sincerity. Do you realize what that means? The lie of one's own sincerity: it is the worst thing that can befall a man. I felt it crouching at the bottom of my heart, as must be felt in the intimate recesses of apparently healthy flesh, the latent ulcer of hereditary cancer. And I started to hate the University and the life of the city, the friends who admired me, the woman I loved, everything which was the cause or effect of that duplicity in myself.'

Santos listened to him with great interest, and with feelings of optimism. Who could still think and express himself so lucidly, was not a man beyond hope. But it couldn't last long. It was the whiplash of alcohol, and the habituated organism

only responded to the stimulant for short periods, followed by sudden lapses into unconsciousness. And, in effect, this short pause was enough for the mirage once again to vanish.

'Kill the centaur! He, he. Don't be an idiot, Santos Luzardo. Do you think those remarks about the centaur are pure rhetoric? I tell you it exists. I have heard it neigh. Every night it passes here. And not only here—there, in Caracas, too. And further away still. Wherever there may be one of us carrying in his veins Luzardo blood, the centaur's neigh is heard. You too have heard it, and that's why you are here. Who has said it is possible to kill the centaur? Me? Spit in my face, Santos Luzardo. The centaur is a spirit. A hundred years it has been galloping over this land, and a hundred more will pass. I thought myself to be civilized, the first civilized being in my family, but it was enough that it should be said "Come to revenge your father", for the barbarian in me to take over. The same has happened to you: you heard the call. I will see you yet fall into her arms and go mad for one of her caresses. And she will kick you with her foot, and when you say "I am willing to marry you", she will laugh at your misery, and . . .'

He tore at his hair. The fixed obsession, which just a little while ago had crept into his discourse, had now at last possessed him. His arms fell limp, strands of hair wound round his fingers, and sinking his head in his chest he murmured:

'The devourer of men.'

Santos Luzardo looked for a while in silence with oppressed heart on the dramatic spectacle of that shambles of humanity, and then, trying to revive him, asked:

'And your daughter?'

But Lorenzo, his gaze fixed on the horizon of the plain, went on murmuring:

'The plain! the cursed plain, devourer of men!'

And Santos thought:

'In reality, more than to the seductions of the famous doña Barbara, this unfortunate man has succumbed to the brutifying action of the desert.'

A sudden flash of lucidity lit the face of the man. For a moment the effect of his sombre drunkenness disappeared:

'Marisela,' he called. 'Come to meet your cousin.'

But as no one answered in the hovel, he added:

'She won't come out of there unless she is dragged by the hair. She is wilder than a colt. A colt.'

He let his head fall again, and from his contracted mouth slow threads of saliva oozed.

'Well, Lorenzo,' said Santos, standing up, 'I will come here often.'

'The drunkard stood up suddenly and stumbled into the house.

'Leave her alone,' shouted Santos, thinking he was fetching his daughter. 'Some other day I will meet her,' and he started to untie his horse. He had his foot in the stirrup when he saw that Lorenzo had once more raised the decanter to his lips, spilling the contents over himself in his efforts to gulp down the liquid. He ran into the room to take it from his hands. But the drunkard had already swallowed sufficient to fall as if struck by lightning. He caught hold of Luzardo's arms and, fixing him with a delirious gaze, said:

'Santos Luzardo. Look at me. This earth never forgives.'

(Translated by T. Kent)

RÓMULO GALLEGOS, born in Caracas, 1884, became well known as a writer in the famous *Revista La Alborada*, directed by Julio Rosales, Julio Planchart, and Enrique Soublette. He has held many important official and editorial posts. His most famous novels *Doña Barbara* and *Cantacabras* depict Venezuelan life admirably. They have been translated into various languages and will probably be filmed in the future. To-day Rómulo Gallegos stands out as one of Venezuela's most notable writers.

THE DREAM

(Chapter 1 from "The Lost Ant")

MIRIAM BLANCO-FOMBONA

'MAY I bring you a chair, Señora?' the new Ambassador's wife said politely. A small, bent, brown figure stood huddled at her side. She had been the wife of her country's attaché for many years. Now she had almost become an institution and an honoured friend of all the diplomatic corps though her husband had been retired a long time. Doña Maria Gonzalez brought her a chair, and the old lady sank gratefully into it. 'They're very tiring these cocktail parties,' she said in a thin, cracked voice. 'I can't stand the way I used to. Ah! Thank you,' she added, accepting a glass of pink champagne. Its bitter-sweet taste gave the old woman a tingling sensation. Doña Maria Gonzalez had seized another chair and sat down at her side. 'I suppose, Doña Consuelo,' she said, 'you must have seen so many of these receptions.' They looked round the crowded room. People stood everywhere in groups of twos and threes holding their glasses. The women were beautifully groomed. The men looked bored or rather the worse for drink. It smelt of expensive scents, alcohol, and humanity. 'Yes,' the old lady said, 'I have been to so many I can hardly count them. Besides,' she added, 'you must remember my daughter was a peeress. I am very proud of her. You will soon realize, my dear, it is a great achievement for a foreigner. Flora was a peeress,' she repeated. She began to nod. Doña Consuelo was getting old. The heavy atmosphere and champagne she had had made her sleepy. She smiled drowsily at the Ambassador's wife. 'I am very proud of my daughter.' Her lips seemed to form the word peeress, but before she could utter it, her head had sunk forward and she was dozing in her seat.

The tiny pueblo of Hormiga Perdida ¹ nestled at the foot of the Andes. The narrow winding road led to the great modern highway built by the vision of The Protector and the money

¹ In Spanish, 'Hormiga Perdida' means 'Lost Ant'.—*Author's Note.*

and sweat of those who would not be protected. Hormiga Perdida, however, was neither protected to its advantage nor otherwise, for it was too insignificant to attract even the lowest of El Protector's friends. It had changed little in the four centuries of its existence. The main street was as straight and narrow as the days the first Spaniards had built it. It was so narrow that a broad man standing with outstretched arms could span it. Narrow fronted houses lined the street. The pale pink, green, blue, orange or dirty white walls stood like sentinels. The single window was barred and shuttered. No peering eyes were ever allowed to penetrate the precincts. Small spindle-legged naked children, pot-bellied with worms, played in the evil-smelling gutter. When one walked down the main street of Hormiga Perdida one felt suffocated, as much by the heat as by the atmosphere. The Andes towered directly above, as though in silent reproach of man's puny effort, for their's was an effortless beauty, 'the unravished bride of quietness, the foster-child of silence and slow time.'

In the smallest, dirtiest house of Hormiga Perdida lived Don Alejandro de Tan Corto, the Man with a Future. Don de Tan Corto was a lean, lively little man, thin as a thread and as vibrant as a live worm. In the street he was Don Alejandro de Tan Corto, and when he forgot to strut a good companion. In his house, where he was nominally 'mi dueño y mi señor',¹ he was, in reality, the humble servidor of Doña Consuelo. Doña Consuelo was small, bent, and brown but as tough as a nut and as hard to crack. She had all the faults of a true Indian, little of their qualities. Yet Doña Consuelo had a magnificent brain and knew how to rule as well as think. At the moment she was busy doing both.

'Bestia,' she yelled furiously at Don Alejandro, 'haven't I told you every day of your maldita life not to buy any more lottery tickets, not one lottery ticket, not half a lottery ticket, no, not even a quarter of a quarter of a lottery ticket.' She paused for breath. 'But, Consuelo,' protested Don de Tan Corto, 'you know it was different this time. I have it from the highest authority, from San José himself.' 'Carajo! What

¹ In Spanish, 'my master' and 'my lord', as wives call their husbands.—*Author's Note.*

do I care about you and your dreams and San José. Dream indeed, dream, dream, dream, that's all you ever do. A fine story indeed, you son of the devil. Curse you and the mother that bore you! Don't you think I'm going to believe any more lies. San José told you. He came specially down from heaven to explain to you in a dream that if you bought the lottery ticket he was holding you would become a rich man. Anyway saints don't gamble.' Don Alejandro interrupted her timidly. 'I never said San José gambled. I only said he told me that if I bought the lottery ticket he showed me I would become rich. Besides,' he added as if the proof were conclusive, 'when I woke up I remembered the number of the ticket perfectly well.' 'How much?' 'The price? Well, it wasn't very much, and it's nearly Lent so we'll be saving on the meat and—' he stopped for he was talking into thin air. 'Anyway,' he muttered to himself, 'that settles it. I won't be marrying her this year whatever Don Miguel may say. If she's like this now, God only knows what she'd be if I married her. She'd refuse to work.' Every time the woman insulted him, he reflected on those lines. It was eight years now since he and Consuelo had been living together, nominally as man and wife. In reality, like most Indians, he had refused to marry for he knew that the day he married he would lose all pretence of freedom and his trump card against the woman. Besides, it was always his one consolation. There was always time and Easter duties were a long way off.

The Tuesday before Ash Wednesday was a big day for Hormiga Perdida. On that day no one worked, everyone played and drank, and the results of the lottery were published. The men gathered in a group near a fountain with a big drinking trough for cattle returning from the fields. The women sat on the steps of the church, ungainly heaps of dull black. The younger girls were out of sight. Publicly the men and women of Hormiga Perdida never mixed. Custom had created this strict separation of the sexes. By immemorial tradition each class of the community paid tribute to it. The men chewed tobacco and spat it out. They slouched and lounged in their white suits. The women sweated in their black and alternated curses with lullabies and expressions of endearment as they

looked after their children. 'My mother's joy, my treasure, my prince, my king!' 'May the devil and the son of the devil tear your eyes out. May he make you eat your tongue.' The village resounded with most horrible curses. But they were so frequent that nobody took any notice.

. Suddenly the two chattering groups stopped talking, cursing, and chewing. The Alcalde¹ was standing at the top of the Church steps. On his right was the priest, Don Miguel; on his left the Secretary holding a huge basket full of tiny coloured bits of paper. He looked twice his usual height for during this brief time once a year, he was the arbiter of the village's destiny. This was His Day, this was his finest hour. The thrill of the moment filled everybody. The air was electric. 'My fellow-countrymen, my brothers,' the Alcalde began. The well-known speech followed. Alcaldes came and went, but the speech was always the same. Hormiga Perdida knew it by heart and would not have forgone a single word of it. It was a time-honoured ritual and it was right and proper it should announce the big event of the year. 'And now, mis amigos, in the presence of the reverend father and of all you present I call upon the Secretary to perform his duty.' The tiny drops of sweat purling round Don de Tan Corto's neck grew to an appreciable size. His throat was dry. His small eyes had almost disappeared in their sockets. He prayed to Saint Joseph as he hadn't prayed since he had grown up. 'Please,' he begged, 'please, please don't do this to me. What have I done to you? I'll marry her. I'll give you two fat candles, but please,' and he started all over again: he shut his eyes. Something snapped in his brain. He felt himself fall into a big green emptiness. Saint Joseph was holding a lottery ticket, and Saint Joseph's face was the face of the Secretary. Saint Joseph's voice was the Secretary's voice. The number it said was the number of the dream. He was a rich man. He was the Man with a Future. He was. . . . For half an hour the man with a future was dead to the world and its fortunes.

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¹ Mayor.

THE GLORY OF MAMPORAL

ANDRES ELOY BLANCO

‘COME, come. Let me tell you a little about the exciting life of Mamporal. And don’t say village life is tedious compared to the interesting one of cities. I refuse to believe it.’ I had written these words only yesterday, in my letter to Adriana, my hasty friend. Then I added: ‘If you wish, Mamporal is the capital of the world. These days Mamporal is the centre of the universe, at any rate, for me.’

In the capital they know nothing of the movement, of the intensity and giddy life of Mamporal. Over there, with their varied cosmopolitan life, cars, the various social strata, and a hundred other things typical of big cities, they have forgotten the excitement of domestic quarrels, of small but sensational happenings, and of those ding-dong conflicts that make village life as intense as that of the great metropolis. To believe the contrary is to deny the fact that in a microscope one can discover a world as feverish as the one seen through a telescope. Mamporal has more life than any other city I know. Remember, too, that I know everybody in Mamporal. How pleasant life is knowing everyone.

During the last thirty days truly sensational and diverse things have happened in the village. But each one has affected the entire social body. And everyone has taken a part. This is impossible in big cities: total success in the collective core; unanimity of feeling. All Mamporal shares every single event of Mamporal.

The recent sensational happenings could be classified according to their intensity or type. But it is evident that the most transitory and smallest event shakes this village of huts and each separate hovel down the long dusty highway. Genuine Mamporalian political successes have nothing in common with national politics. Here national politics are unknown; almost as if they belonged to another world. For Mamporal, the V.I.P.s (very important people) of the nation

are to be feared. They are shorn of Municipal fervour. It is in the great domestic episodes that the soul of the village is seen. The Local Governor of Mamporal, his Secretary, the Judge, and the Police represent the village acting for the nation, the arrival of a high functionary the nation acting for the village.

The latest political success was the heated dispute between the Judge and the Secretary of the Town Council. The Secretary drew his revolver. The men, in mass, came out from their hovels. The women called their husbands and children. The street echoed to the sound of barricading. But the Local Governor arrived and said the Judge was right. The Secretary crept away slowly, step by step, and the village girls devoured him with their eyes.

The Social Scandal was the raping of a young lass. She belonged to the old hut of Garambunda. They found the knickers, torn and bloody.

Another event has been my arrival. Here they could not make out why I had come. The first week everyone ostracized me. Finally I made a public statement. I had come to discover the author of the rape. After six days of investigation I pinned the crime on Francisco Sierra, and I sent him to the capital of the state. The people of Mamporal love me. I have been clever enough to say that the locality is my second country. Everyone tells me their troubles. I am their confessor.

But the gem of events during this month has been the match between 'Mamporal Athletic Club' and 'The New Stars' of Manati. Since the old days of the White War (*guerra blanca*), no one can remember such thrills. And no wonder! Whoever knows Mamporal and Manati will be able to gauge the feverish excitement.

Mamporal and Manati are neighbours. Six leagues divide the two villages, but six deep, irreconcilable leagues. Manati is Guef, Mamporal Ghibelline. Manati is Tyrian; Mamporal is Trojan. Manati is the Devil; Mamporal is the Nuncio. It is not strange to find this hatred between two neighbouring villages. I had better say that not to find it is rare. Frontiers create hatred, proximity rancour. And this depends on the importance of a village in relation to the other. The Valle

cannot hate Caracas because Caracas is much more important than the Valle. Arganda can hate Chinchon, but Chinchon cannot hate Madrid. Mamporal and Manati can hate each other, but neither of them can hate Calabozo.

This hatred between Manati and Mamporal is historic, but it has had repercussions and tremendous sporadic upheavals. It is the result of competence and of exacerbated enthusiasm badly directed.

On one occasion the Governor decided to build the Main Highway through Manati. Not one single inhabitant of Mamporal travelled by land. They went by the River Apure, thus lengthening their journey by five days.

Another time a pianola was sent to Manati. The Manati people went in file and played on the artificial piano with such vigour that the music might have been heard in Mamporal. A fortnight later Don Damian Robles of Mamporal had Two Pianolas in his house.

Then a disaster overtook Mamporal. Lightning struck Mamporal and three houses were set on fire. Manati rejoiced. 'That's the end of Mamporal!'

But a few days later a grave problem arose; Mamporal was *News* in the National Press. In the newspapers of Calabozo and of San Fernando, even in the big dailies of the Capital of the Republic, headlines read :—

'The Catastrophe of Mamporal!'

'For the Victims of Mamporal.'

'Society pro-Mamporal.'

Manati became alarmed and four 'philanthropists' offered their houses so that they should be burnt on the first stormy night.

Till then they had only attacked each other indirectly. But fate would have it that the people of Manati were compelled to call to their rescue the 'male mid-wife' of Mamporal, as a woman in labour was in danger. The Mamporalian's name was Theobald. He was a vile man, small, bent double, and with a hump. Moreover he squinted: one eye looked towards Mamporal, the other towards Manati. So the lame, evilly disposed Theobald went. He came to Manati. As soon as the

new baby of Manati had been born someone peered into the room, saying: 'What is it Theobald? Boy or girl?' And Theobald, the accoucheur of Mamporal, cradling in his arms a lusty male, purred softly:

'A girl, as usual!'

They were going to kill him. But Theobald returned to Mamporal, and amidst shrieks of laughter from everyone he told them of the uproar he had caused those slugs of Manati.

Now relations have been strained to a pitch because of a match between the two baseball clubs. The first game was won by Mamporal, 32—20 runs, the Mamporal team having had 27 hits. The second game, played at Manati, was won by the 'New Stars'. Thus they tied. The third game, which was to be the decisive one, ended indecisively. When the Mamporal people realized they were losing, they concocted a scene. But I had better give you details.

During the 8th Round, as the Manati team was winning 29—23, a Mamporal runner tried to steal the second base. A Manatian caught him out with a good shot. He waited in triumph. The Mamporalian paused for a moment, then violently butted his antagonist in the stomach. Dropping his ball, the victim fell, nose bleeding, and spitting blood. His passage clear, the Mamporalian now made for home. Suddenly the Umpire yelled: 'You're out.'

'What do you mean, out? Out your grandmother!'

'It's that you—'

The Mamporalian captain intervened.

'What has happened?'

'The gentleman is out.'

'Out? The other barred his way.'

'No, sir. He butted him.'

'Well, good for him. Cheers!'

A thick, menacing crowd had collected. The people of Manati assembled, gripping their bats. The Umpire, a domineering fellow, bellowed furiously:

'I declare the game forfeit, in favour of the New Stars.'

'In favour of the New Stars? You'll soon be seeing a thousand stars, you blackguard!' And they gave him one over the head which laid him out, mouth open, and pouring blood even from his eyes.

The Local Governor intervened in the middle of the squabble. Tempers were pacified.

'So my friends; the man at the second base is not out because the other barred his way. But he goes to the Police Station. The one who hit the Umpire is out, but he, too, goes to the Police. And the game is suspended because of the rain. The championship will be played another day.

The sun shone gloriously on the 'New Stars' as they marched off on foot. But as the garrulous Mirabal Villasmil said:

'If Mamporal loses, it's the end of the world!'

The news had fallen like a bomb on Mamporal. There was no precedent. On 19th April in the principal square of Manati a bust was to be erected to the memory of Colonel Julio Rondon, national hero, born in Manati, and pride of the plainsmen.

General sorrow prevailed, and no wonder. A sudden catastrophe had befallen Mamporal. Mamporal was humiliated, depopulated, devastated a thousand miles below her hated rival. It was obvious. Manati had her Square and her bust because Manati had her Hero. Mamporal had no Hero. Mamporal had no glory. Mamporal had No One. Mamporal had her square, but she had only used it as a market, a parking place for donkeys, and as solitary promenade for cows at night. At the most they might erect a statue to Bolivar or Palz. But what was this compared to the other's 'Special Glory', their 'personal' glory, the glory of being the birth-place of a hero?—Nothing!

The Progressive Society of the Mamporal Municipal Council assembled. They considered the situation anxiously. A member, Francisco de Paula Vera, opted that: 'By fair means or foul the unfortunate bust of Julio Rondon would not be erected.'

The Local Governor protested in the name of personal

liberty. He ended by saying: 'And isn't it your fault for not having anyone? We in Carora have Pedro Leon Torres.'

The vociferous Mirabal Villasmil, the Secretary of the Society, seconded by mine host, Don Antonio Karam, a Mamporalian star, voted that: 'Manati should be denied the glory of being the birthplace of Colonel Julio Rondon, illustrious hero of the Independence. That proofs existed that he had been born in Calabozo.'

Theobald, the male midwife, rejected the suggestion.

'No man! Julio Rondon was born in Manati. Even the cats know this. Besides, they have the birth certificate.'

Felipe Rada ventured timidly: 'We could prove Julio Rondon was an imbecile.'

'Certainly not!' interrupted the Local Governor. 'That would be against our national glory.'

'Then there is nothing left. What can we do?'

'There is one thing,' insinuated crafty old Theobald.

'One thing! What?'

'Well—a bust—'

'A bust! Of whom?'

'I don't know. In my house I have a bronze bust as big as this. Had it for many years.'

'But—of whom is the bust?'

'I don't know. It could be Rajas Paul of Andueza. I don't know. Or Vargas.'

'But whom does it resemble?'

'Nobody. Of that I'm sure. I've had it twenty years in a corner of my mother's room. I don't know how I got it. But what I do know is that it resembles no one.'

'Then,' cried the garrulous Mirabal Villasmil, 'we're saved. Long live Mamporal! Long live Mamporal!'

'Long live Mamporal!' echoed Theobald.

And coming from the lips of the accoucheur of Mamporal, it was like the heralding of a birth; like the birth of a Hero.

On 19th April, at the same time that fireworks in Manati were celebrating the inauguration of the bronze bust of Colonel Julio Rondon, dauntless plainsman, here, in the clean, sun-drenched square of Mamporal, the Local Governor pulled

aside a white sheet. A bronze bust was unveiled, the bust of an austere-looking man, dressed up in local costume. A few simple but noble words were carved on the pedestal:

‘From grateful Mamporal to their Benefactor.’

(translated by Miriam Blanco-Fombona)

ANDRES ELOY BLANCO, one of Venezuela's foremost writers in prose and verse, was born in Cumana, Edo, Sucre, about 1897. He became well known as a poet in a famous competition called ‘Concours de los Juegos Florales de Caracos’ (1916) in which he won first prize. In 1923 he also won the first prize for Spanish-speaking poets in Spain. On the strength of this he was invited on a triumphal lecturing tour to Spain. In 1928 he opposed the tyranny of Gomez, and was imprisoned at Puerto Cabello. Since Gomez's death he has had several important governmental posts, and to-day is an M.P. and the equivalent of the Speaker of the House.

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

THE RISE OF THE SPANISH AMERICAN EMPIRE.

SALVADOR DE MADARIAGA. Hollis and Carter. 21s.

THERE is a wood block printed on paper by Hiroshige that shows an eagle magnificent in suspension. The sea, the flat land, and distant Fujijama lie beneath. The spread bird scans the water and the earth: in the keen gold eye of the eagle is centred the life of the picture. It is called *Ten Thousand Acres*.

Señor Salvador de Madariaga so gazes on the past, on the rise of the Spanish American Empire. He overwings it and earnestly searches the height and the depth of that passionate act which was the seeking, the finding, the conquering, and the immediate ennobling of the New World. In his book, *The Rise of the Spanish American Empire*, he sweeps the reader up into the ether of justice, from that height to scan three hundred years of time. This writer is a philosopher who understands how easily a man may commit grave sins and yet be not entirely bad. He knows the words are his own: 'The oneness of collective human life and how deeply the tyrant lives in the people and the executioner is the victim.' History is not, he says, a melodrama with villains absolutely black and maidens absolutely fair. Señor Madariaga sees peoples as a collective form of human life: 'From the bosom of these peoples spring . . . the chief actors of the plays, so that, seen thus, even the greatest men fall into the general patter their respective peoples design on the canvas of time.' 'One might,' he says, 'give the name of *body historic* to this kind of historical entity . . . one of these patterns or *bodies historic* is the Hispanic World.'

Señor Madariaga stresses the glad fact that material means counted for nothing in the conquest of America; Colón discovers America with two caravels, the biggest of which was 140 tons. We may glory in the deeds of these Spanish leaders and of their companions because 'their spirit did it all'.

Often the writer of this book returns to the word 'ennoble' as a key-word of the founders of this Spanish American Empire. He writes that the word recurs often in the papers of those

days: 'Where moderns would say "develop" or "open up", those men said "ennoble".' The cities they raised were so beautiful that '... in the United States the scanty remains of Spanish civilization, a gate here and an arch there and the square cloister of a mission yonder, are treasured and starred in the travel books.' He shows us that the cities of Mexico and of Lima were noble cities fully a century before London deserved such a name: 'London did not become a noble city till towards the end of the seventeenth century, despite the wealth and political importance it had already enjoyed for so long.'

Two little passages evoked remembrances of Peru in this reviewer. Señor Madariaga, telling of the seventeenth century ladies of Lima, writes: 'The foot had to be small and the Limenas found Spanish women ridiculously big-footed. A small piece of leather the shape of an "8" was all they needed as a base. No heel.' In the twentieth century this reviewer remembers young men of Lima standing on the street corners and whispering compliments to the pretty and always matron-chaperoned girls. But when a tall long-footed Englishwoman passed, they audibly grumbled in Spanish, 'How big the feet are of the English girl.' They would not excuse that—even though her face were lovely. And in another part of the book, Señor Madariaga records that the Church Council of Lima in the seventeenth century said of the Indians: 'For they can hardly be taught to be Christians unless we first teach them to be men and live as such.' This reviewer in the twentieth century remembers having been told by a French officer (for at that time the charge of the military training in Peru was entrusted in part at least to French officers): 'When an Indian comes to the barracks from the highlands, we start by clapping him on the back and saying, "You are a man, you are a man, and not an animal; remember you are a man."'

In a vast manner this book covers and controls its vast subject. Señor Salvador de Madariaga contemplates a further volume on the Fall of the Spanish American Empire. In this one of the Rise of the Empire, the author, in the prologue, refers to Simón Bolívar the Liberator who 'Broke in fact the

political links which for three centuries had united the American Continent to Spain: he broke them by the almost unaided virtue of his indomitable spirit.' But this reviewer remembers, although not word for word, a tragic avowal written in a letter to another who also had been foremost in this work of making independent one of the various divisions of the Empire. In this letter, Simón Bolívar enumerated, in short bitter clauses, conclusions he had drawn, and exposed his disillusionment. In words of this import he summed up his discouragement: 'He that makes a revolution sows an ocean.'

In the successive chapters of this book, Señor Madariaga treats of Whites, Indians, Blacks; of culture; of civil organizations; of labour, and of economic affairs; and of military arrangements. He views the historical evolution of the Empire up to the end of the seventeenth century called, by him, the Austrian Period to which period the second part of the book is devoted. In this part is delightfully shown the 'liberty, wealth, and style' of life at this period in the New World, in Mexico, in Lima.

Afterwards, in Part Three, he depicts the eighteenth century, the Bourbon Period, the period of French influence in Spain when the 'old human-Christian sense' of Spain 'turned into a human rational idea', when 'the feeling of fraternity in Christ yielded to an idea of order and sense in society'. When 'the salvation of the soul was neglected for the betterment of the body'. In Spain the arts and crafts had been 'taught for the sake of the gospel. Now, 'the gospel was taught . . . if at all, for the sake of the arts and crafts.' Now progress 'in every walk of political and civil life was quick and striking'. And Spain felt liberal, renewed and strong, but she no longer relied on her own substance; instead she put on a new culture adopted from outside countries. And when the Creoles of the New World found Spain outstripped by other European cultures, their tie to Spain was loosened. In Spanish America, writes Señor Madariaga, 'Spanish Anarchy, Indian passivity, and Negro turbulence worked against the Christian culture.'

Señor Salvador de Madariaga does not exculpate the Spaniards from acts of gross cruelty towards the Indians and

of oppression, but his work proves, once more, that by the Crown, the State, the parent, every effort was made to protect the Indians. He proves that the laws were righteously intentioned, were good, but that by the evasion of the law abominable deeds were done rooted in greed and self-interest. This reviewer, reading during years about the seventeenth century in Peru, has again and again wondered that the abuses were not even greater. For notice an Englishman going abroad, going in safety and comfort and in plus-fours by steamer to France. Arriving in Paris he alters his code of behaviour, allows himself indiscretions, improprieties, is rude to 'these foreigners who spoil the country'. At hazard of life the Spaniard sailed to a world as different to the homeland, as foreign as exotic, as now paradisaical, not infernal as far Venus a distant Saturn. Without preparation they found men, naked, coloured, man-eating, sodomic. Saw them worshipping their rulers that were incestuous, to kin, to wife, their sisters. Yet they baptized these strangers, settled down with them; married them, mated with them. Gave them Latin and Spanish, admitted them to cloister and convent and university, regarded them as backward and inert but did not despise their race. They did not exile them, drive them into reservations, nor exterminate them. They were brutal all too often as men of every country and of every age have been and are, and ever will be, to the weak and to those whom they hound for their own ends. Señor Madariaga does not at all unduly nor too often expose the misinterpretations, misjudgments, and malice of too many Anglo-Saxon writers on the Spanish Americas.

In his new Spanish volumes, *Los Incas del Peru*, Señor Reberto Levillier, historian of the Americas, has made a list of the misquotations and misinterpretations which Clements R. Markham has made in just one chapter of one of his books. He shows the original Spanish source of the quotations and in a neat column the errors of quotation made by Mr. Markham, who, however, is not alone in this unworthy distortion.

For those who value the individual person above the political mass-men, who value style, liberty, depth, richness, variety, leisure; who value Christian fraternity (in spite of

many Cains) above free-thinking humanism; who value the hand above the machine—from the Spanish Empire will evoke praise. For it is time to be thankful to Spain in as much as she did not wipe out the native population by the process of her civilization, to admire her because, instead of peopling the Americas with rogues she sent out her nobility and the best of her people; because, in the concluding words of this good, just, and thoughtful book: 'The language remains alive with the ways of thinking it breeds and the whole people who speak it learn with it the value of leisure and the sense of passive resistance to that insidious enemy, the State, particularly the good State.'

VIOLET CLIFTON

SCIENCE, LIBERTY AND PEACE. ALDOUS HUXLEY.

Chatto and Windus. 3s. 6d.

It is saddening to find Mr. Huxley following his important and fascinating *Perennial Philosophy* by a work so weak and jejune as this admirably produced tract. In sixty-three pages he tells us what is wrong with our social, industrial, and economic order; he then tells us what we should do about it. I am not being very unfair if I say that the suggested solution is that we should all live in a Mediterranean climate without government but each with a small electric generator combining with material simplicity to purify our hearts.

I am not arguing against pure hearts and I am convinced that the governmental sphere should be as small as possible, *given our numbers, our needs, and scarce resources*. But the possible is of no interest to Mr. Huxley, nor is he aware that he implies a complete sociology, philosophy of history and theory of value by any one of his generalizations. The reader who cares to dwell on these implications will find them contradictory and impossible, but secure in the support of such authorities as Dr. Gene Weltfish, Mr. Huxley does not even find it necessary to examine the premises of his own thought.

Worse yet, he writes here like a bad American Associate Professor of Sociology. Consider in proof this sentence: 'Now, it seems pretty obvious that man's psychological, to say nothing of his spiritual, needs cannot be fulfilled unless. first,

he has a fair measure of personal independence and personal responsibility within and towards a self-governing group; unless, secondly, his work possesses a certain æsthetic value and human significance, and unless, in the third place, he is related to his natural environment in some organic, rooted, and symbiotic way' (p. 23). Mr. Huxley expounded the same social philosophy some years ago in *After Many a Summer* and his prose then was not an offence.

I suppose Mr. Huxley produces a tract like this on two premises: the road to God is that of *The Perennial Philosophy*, and that road will be most widely accessible in a world reformed on the lines he now demands. A more generous conception of deity might result in a more convincing estimation of the possibilities of social life!

DONALD G. MACRAE

FOUR CAUTIONARY TALES, translated from the Chinese
by HAROLD ACTON and LEE YI-HSIEH. John Lehmann.
8s. 6d.

THESE four stories are from a very rare collection *Hsing Shih Heng Yen (Common Tales to Rouse the World)*, which was published in the early seventeenth century, and probably written long before that. They all have some moral implications—an effort which, I think, was made to please the ruling class rather than to enlighten the reading public. This is probably why they have survived the expurgations of the pedantic Confucian officials. Indeed, quite a number of books of the same kind, but without the same moralistic veneer, have failed to live down to our day. For stories and novels, which dealt with human life, and therefore also with human passions and whims and fantasies, were not regarded as the orthodox form of literature, and consequently in constant danger of being suspended from circulation.

To enjoy these four tales, the reader may be advised to disregard totally the superficial 'cautionary' significance. According to Mr. Arthur Waley, who wrote an excellent preface to the translation, they stand far above the *Decameron* in complication, in poetic colouring, and in elegance. I think this is no exaggeration. Boccaccio coined his tales for the eye, while

the Chinese authors did them for both the eye and the ear. For seldom a story was printed in China unless it had been told many times by professional story-tellers and proved successful. It must have not only good style and lively diction, but also such entertaining features as an intricate plot, humour, wit, and strong human interest. These four tales embody all these qualities, and would give pleasure to any reader irrespective of his cultural background.

Behind the façade of morality there is something 'immoral' in the tales. I can hardly call this element 'obscenity', but this word seems near the mark. There are quite a few scenes of sexual intercourse described in delicate language, which would nevertheless evoke daring imaginations in the audience. There are also passages about the hypocrisy of professional religious people, which might shock the innocent flock. All these delineations, however, are based realistically on the unstability of human nature. But that the authors had to dress them up in the garment of morality, in which I believed they were least interested, in order to preserve their writing or perhaps to earn their living, bespeaks very eloquently the tragedy of being a writer. This practice still holds true to some extent to-day all over the world; only the morality has different connotations in different places.

The translation is excellent. John Lehmann have also to be congratulated for their beautiful production of the book.

CHUN-CHAN YEH

HENRY VAUGHAN: A LIFE AND INTERPRETATION.

F. E. HUTCHINSON. Oxford: The Clarendon Press. 15s.

THE bulk of what is now known about the life of Henry Vaughan derives from the researches of Miss Gwennllian Morgan and Miss Louise Guiney. Miss Morgan had behind her a Brecknock ancestry of three hundred years; whereas Miss Guiney, whose origins cover half of Western Europe, had, it seems, not one drop of Welsh blood. The residue of this strange but happy partnership supplies the data to which Dr. Hutchinson has added the fruits of his own researches in this first full-length biography of Vaughan.

The result, needless to remark, is an admirable piece of

scholarship conducted with thoroughness and a spirit of humility. What Dr. Hutchinson has to say can be accepted without suspicion and it is, Heaven knows, refreshing, for once, to be given the facts and spared the conjectures. Against this, however, I would set a certain vagueness of presentation. Numerous Vaughans come into the picture, and there is a fair measure of intermarriage. These things alone are sufficient to confuse any but the most wide awake reader unless presented lucidly and deliberately, and I must confess that I found it impossible to remain wide awake all the time. Dr. Hutchinson has, moreover, a tendency to over-elaborate. It is quite to the point to comment on the fact that Vaughan was buried 'in the churchyard, not within the church as was usual in his day for those of any social standing', but why go into detail about four other worthies who wished themselves to be buried in that way?

The connoisseur of seventeenth-century poetry will find this book indispensable, and it will be useful, in a more general way, to the student of Welsh social history, but I doubt whether it will hold very much interest for the general reader. The truth is that Henry Vaughan of Newton led an uneventful kind of life, and his acts and encounters belong to the local weekly, not to the national daily. The biographical facts, therefore, throw very little light on the man's character and, by implication, on his art. We have no right, of course, to insist that poets should correlate their work with a penchant for opium or chewing tobacco, that they should proclaim apocalypse or die in tavern brawls, but we may hope to find in their lives a pattern into which their art will fit. Let us consider Habington who, as Dr. Hutchinson points out, influenced Vaughan at the outset. Habington was born on Guy Fawkes Day I at Hindlip, one of the country houses used by the plotters. His mother is thought to have betrayed the plot to Mounteagle. He was educated by Jesuits. He 'did run with the times and was not unknown to Oliver the Usurper' (*teste* Anthony Wood). He lived in the civil wars, but slighted Bellona (*teste* Langbaine). He ended up as a recluse. These things, together with the more commonplace facts, show him for what he was, a misfit in society, and afford a pattern

which adequately covers his cheerless lyrics, his ponderous tragi-comedy and his historical works. I can fit no such pattern round the infinitely greater art of Henry Vaughan.

Yet, granting all this, we must remember that Vaughan himself chose that posterity should know him as 'The Swan of Usk', as 'The Silurist', and it is the geographical, rather than the social, background that matters. It was from the Welsh landscape that he derived those shapes and colours of the temporal that were, for him, symbols of the One, and 'bright shoots' of the whiteness of the eternal. There, too, he found that vigorous and concrete imagery which enabled him to communicate profound religious experience with perfect lucidity and calm detachment. Dr. Hutchinson insists on the importance of this background which might, however, have been more forcefully presented.

Many of Dr. Hutchinson's critical observations are excellent. There is, for instance, a wholly admirable chapter on the influence of Welsh poetry and of the Welsh language on Vaughan's work, with an impressive comment on the significance that he derived from 'the rich connotations of the Welsh word *gwyn*' (*white*). Vaughan's philosophical sources are amply treated.

Briefly, this is not a book for those who like biographies as such. It demands of its readers that they should have initial faith in Henry Vaughan, and even then it requires effort. I suggest that it is well worth while to make the effort. It may be urged that no minor poet is worth it. I would agree; but then, I doubt, in my simple way, whether Vaughan can reasonably be dismissed as a minor poet.

J. M. NOSWORTHY

THE CROWN OF LIFE. G. WILSON KNIGHT. Essays in

Interpretation of Shakespeare's Final Plays. O.U.P. 18s. THE culmination of twenty years' creative work and the rich harvest of his faith that 'Destructive criticism must be met, as it can only be met, in this and other spheres, by the constructive imagination', Wilson Knight's *Crown of Life* is also the crown of his own career as the most adventurous interpreter of Shakespeare in our time. How naturally the harvest has

ripened from the seed may be observed from the republication in this volume of the first statement of his theme, *Myth and Miracle* (1929), with no more than half a dozen explanatory and mildly deprecatory footnotes. And what an admirable credo it contains! 'Secondary considerations necessarily condition the materials of a poet's work: but it is in the nature of his accomplishment within and transcending these limits that we must always search for the lasting significance of either poet or prophet.'

There has been nothing half-hearted about Wilson Knight's quest. Indeed the adverse criticism of the scholar is that he has searched so ardently as sometimes—when he almost convinces himself of the authenticity of the Hecate scenes in *Macbeth*, for instance, and in some of his enthusiasm for *Pericles* in the present volume—to discover beauties that are not there. This is the natural defect—if defect it is—of seeing Shakespeare in the light of a brilliant imagination, a light which kindles new lustre in many familiar jewels and sparkles in what we took for pebbles of a duller sort. Who would wish imagination away when its achievements so often outshine the abortive precisings, the disintegrating negations of the day? Whether there is any appropriate discipline that could completely control this elemental lightning without dimming it is a deep question. The discipline of complete loyalty to his text has always been one of Wilson Knight's finest qualities.

The Crown of Life expounds Shakespeare's final group of plays—*Pericles*, *The Winter's Tale*, *Cymbeline*, *The Tempest*, and *Henry VIII*. The authenticity of all or most of *Pericles* has been often doubted and it is refreshing to read an eloquent and largely convincing plea that the play takes its place as inheritor of many earlier Shakespearean themes and images and precursor of the final vision in which 'The depth and realism of tragedy are present within the structure of romance. The two extremes, happy and sad, of Shakespearian art coalesce to house a new, and seemingly impossible, truth'. At the heart of that truth is the royal child miraculously restored to life, here personified as Marina, and followed in other chapters through the graceful company of children in *The Winter's Tale*, *Cymbeline*, and *The Tempest* to the prophecy over the

Progress



against Pain

¶ Some of the oldest prescriptions known to medical science were engraved upon pillars of stone by the Egyptians, about the seventeenth century B.C. From these prescriptions no physician was allowed to deviate, upon pain of being held responsible if the patient died.

¶ It took many years for medical science to realise that knowledge is not static but progressive.

¶ One recent discovery, for instance, is that a small quantity of a powerful drug will do the work of a large dose if it is backed up by the right combination of other drugs.

¶ A direct outcome of that discovery is 'Cogene', a scientific combination, in tablet form, of four separate drugs, three of them pain relievers and the fourth a stimulant. Because only a minute quantity of each is present, there can be

none of the harmful after-effects that might attend the taking of a larger dose; yet the combination of all four in scientifically balanced proportions is so effective that 'Cogene' will 'reach' the most harassing nerve pain more rapidly than could any single drug. Supplies are limited, but your chemist will see you get *your* share. Price 1/1½d. a tube.

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infant Elizabeth in *Henry VIII* with which Shakespeare's life-work closes. It is impossible in a short notice to do justice to this rich and fascinating commentary.

In a paper on 'Symbolism in Shakespeare' contributed to the *Modern Language Review* recently, Professor Elmer Edgar Stoll—mainly concerned to castigate certain American critics, who have launched impetuously into the seas of imaginative interpretation—spares one buffet for Wilson Knight who 'in volume after volume, is deftly and acceptably accommodating Shakespeare to the present-day taste'. The candid reader of *The Crown of Life* will find it of imagination all compact, full of

Shaping fantasies that apprehend
More than cool reason ever comprehends

and such fantasies are for the lunatic, the lover, and the poet of all ages, not of the present day only or Shakespeare's day.

ROY WALKER

KING HENRY V. Edited by J. DOVER WILSON. New Cambridge Shakespeare. 8s. 6d.

COMIC CHARACTERS OF SHAKESPEARE. JOHN PALMER. Macmillan. 8s. 6d.

SHAKESPEARE'S IMAGINATION. EDWARD A. ARMSTRONG. Lindsay Drummond. 10s. 6d.

A VALEDICTION to Harold Child prefaced to the Stage History in Dover Wilson's edition of *Henry V* reminds us that the New Cambridge Shakespeare is no longer new. It is more than a quarter of a century since Quiller-Couch, Harold Child, and Dover Wilson launched, appropriately and successfully, into *The Tempest*, and a dozen years since 'Q' said farewell to the enterprise. Dover Wilson remains and has lately mended his pace. *Henry V* comes quickly after the two volumes of *Henry IV*; *Macbeth* is to follow this year.

Broadcasting on *Macbeth* recently, after nine months' intensive study of the play, Dover Wilson sounded tired and rather trite. It is easier to find grounds for complaint than heart to utter them. The achievement of bringing together so much of what has been thought and said since the Arden edition appeared at the turn of the century, the diligence of

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research, the careful accuracy of statement are accomplishments of a distinguished scholar. Say what we will, we are all indebted to John Dover Wilson.

If the New Cambridge Shakespeare is by way of being a historic undertaking, and the period of its publication approaches historical dimensions, historicity is also the strength and weakness of Dover Wilson's Introduction to *Henry V*. Discussion of the historical verities is erudite and carefully related to Shakespeare's treatment of the hero-king. Yet somehow it blurs the pattern, leaves us doubtful where Shakespeare's work of art ends and historical fact begins, blurs, too, the vital fact that truth about history and truth about the work of art are truths of a different order and importance.

And in 1947 one reads with glum embarrassment the correlation of Henry's struggle with the Second World War. Dover Wilson has 'learnt more about Shakespeare's Henry from Wavell's *Life of Allenby* than from all the critics put together'. The 'bragging Frenchmen' are 'at times extraordinarily like Mussolini', the war against France seemed as righteous to Shakespeare's public 'as the war against the Nazis seems to us'. Henry's words before Agincourt and Churchill's after the Battle of Britain 'come from the same national mint.' It is all so 1945. The outrage at Hiroshima has disintegrated such vestiges of self-righteous nationalism and heroic glamour as survived blockbusters and blockade. To find only so facile a contemporary significance in *Henry V* is to sink him in the contemporary wreck of hopes and values; and that assuredly is not where Shakespeare left him.

John Palmer appears but once in Dover Wilson's essay, to be told that 'he misses the whole point' of Shakespeare's play, a severe rebuke not wholly unmerited. Whether or not one's enjoyment of Palmer's last and unfinished book, *Comic Characters of Shakespeare*, is unqualified, depends on the strictness of one's idea of the main business of Shakespearean commentary. If criticism should tender the whole, that is the whole play, then Palmer's character-studies are not this side idolatry. But if it is no sin to enjoy Shakespeare unfeignedly and to entertain readers with agreeable speculation about his characters, then John Palmer is amiable enough company.



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and not least diverting when he is, by more austere standards, most irrelevant.

Mr. Armstrong is concerned not with analysis of character, real or imagined, but with psychoanalytical interpretation of Shakespearean imagery and incidental speculations on the bard himself, who comes off no better than the admittedly clinical specimens we meet in standard works on psychopathology.

Mr. Armstrong's previous books have dealt with bird-life, and he selects bird-imagery as a starting-point; but his aviary is curiously restricted. Larks and nightingales make late and limited appearances, the air is filled with kites and crows, geese and jays. Wilson Knight's *Shakespearean Tempest* is twice mentioned, but there is no direct reference to his substantial appendix on *The Shakespearean Aviary*. Comparison of Knight's aviary and Armstrong's at once shows how far the psychoanalytical author has concentrated disproportionately on the more repugnant subject-matter. On the general organization of the imagery Mr. Armstrong is also disappointing. We are no wiser for being told that 'all Shakespeare's imagery can be grouped in relation to Life and Death' or that Love is related to Life and Hatred to Death. Wilson Knight's 'tempest-music' polarity is never mentioned, though this is but a bleak diagram of that imaginative conception. We are left to formulate the underlying unity in which these forces of harmony and disharmony are finally resolved, as they are in the plays. The unity of poetry is not make-believe; it is a revelation of order beneath disorder.

The author's evaluation is dominated by psychoanalytical concepts of 'free association'. He observes the frequency of religious references in *As You Like It*, commencing with the opening words, 'As I remember, Adam . . .', and infers that 'An apparently insignificant cue may initiate the recall of a very extensive series of images'. Having happened to think of Adam, Shakespeare, we are to believe, went on throwing up unconscious and barely relevant religious associations throughout the play which were, nevertheless, integrated into the fabric of his work.

Yet Mr. Armstrong's tabulations persuade that, on the



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darker side at least, certain minor groups of images recur in combination in Shakespeare's plays, not so much because the poet required them on every occasion for his desired effect, but partly at least because they had appeared in company before. Future students of Shakespearean imagery—so far the subject has been no more than broached—will need to be watchful for concatenations of this sort, and not confuse them with the more significant imagery that forms the main stream of poetry.

The three works under review illustrate main trends of contemporary thought on Shakespeare. Significantly, only one deals with a Shakespeare play as a work of art in its own right. The others deal with an arbitrary assortment of characters or conceits which the poet never meant to bring together in significant relationship. Even the editor, confined of necessity to one play, surrounds it with masses of historical detail and modern instances. Never was author so killed with kindness. The necessary discipline is to submit the imagination to the unity of one great play, bring the whole to incandescence, and then place it in an unobtrusive setting of exposition. We have destroyed human life by dissipating the energy in the atom of uranium, and we shall destroy understanding if we dissipate the imaginative power which Shakespeare focused in a single play, and which shines through every facet like the fire inside a diamond of purest water.

ROY WALKER

NO CLOUD OF GLORY. HUBERT NICHOLSON. Progress Publishing. 8s. 6d.

HUBERT NICHOLSON reminds me of an unscrupulous puppet-master. In this novel he bludgeons his characters into presenting the Marxist class-struggle issue in a British seaport town just before the war. The issue, I think, is raised rather tritely, and the blacks and whites of political ideology are more than obvious. What is it then that gives his story some quality and noteworthy power? At a time when British fiction generally has sunk to an appalling level of mediocrity, it is refreshing to be able to read a well-told story written in simple language. On deeper examination also Mr. Nicholson's theme hints at



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certain psychological implications. He shows how the X of despair in one may be turned into a rather religious belief in political partisanship while in another it leads to the demoralization resulting in anarchic vice. Gladys Burton, whose world is one of 'knotted deadly streets', is charged with murder at the age of eighteen after contact with sordid promiscuity and underworld characters. Her case is perhaps reminiscent of the recent Cleft Chin murder. The X of despair and passion in the case of her brother Robin, however, is transmuted into organized revolt. He becomes a fearless agitator and goes to fight with the International Brigade in Spain where he is blown up and loses his mind. Perhaps Mr. Nicholson is not as clear about the whys and wherefores of the psychological processes that turn protest in one case inwards and in another case outwards, as he is about political dogma. But the nightmare he presents is somehow fresh since it is still interwoven in the ethos of our time. Gladys was born in Drag Street with its 'dirty-looking life that spilled out in the form of children and rags', but she dreams of a good life in the *bourgeois* Cecil Avenue. These two areas have an almost frightening symbolism. The drama of trying to bridge the gulf between the two cannot, however, be explained entirely by political reasoning. Mr. Nicholson must know that there are other factors apart from poverty that turn many young women into prostitutes and accomplices of spivs and rogues.

HUGO MANNING

BEVIN BOY. DEREK AGNEW. George Allen and Unwin.
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THE coalfields to-day are infested with eyes and noses prying into the lives of the miners and the working of the mining industry: film script-writers, B.B.C. observers, reporters, journalists, official investigators, social survey teams, all scribbling hard as if the miner's life were the easiest in the world to portray instead of one of the most difficult.

Hundreds of books have been written about mining, either technical and sociological treatises or personal accounts by miners, ex-miners or 'investigators'. Derek Agnew's book falls between the two stools. Before opting for the mines he worked

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in a newspaper office and has succumbed to the temptation of mixing newspaper clippings, statistics, and extracts from his diary, all within 140 pages. He also employs many phrases of obvious origin: 'John Smith of Any Street, Everytown,' 'the gods had willed otherwise,' 'a damning indictment,' and begins his book: 'Many moons ago John Smith made history.' The result is not so much a piece of writing as a scrapbook.

This is a pity, because when he soars beyond the spiritual confines of his newspaper office, he shows flashes of poetry and humour: 'the clash of buffers . . . like the ringing of a toneless bell'; 'a manner befitting all under-managers addressing the gaffer—a subversive tone with an authoritative statement.' It is a disappointment when he relapses to: 'But still those elusive digits comprising total output refused to climb the ladder.'

He goes into detail about his training as a Bevin Boy, even to the extent of recording his lecture notes, but fails to give a vivid picture of daily life underground. This is a difficult task: somehow the pit atmosphere of monotony, darkness, loneliness, endurance, must be created, and it cannot be done by describing jobs and using mining terms. It can only be done by careful, vital and forceful writing. It is the essential *feel* of the life which must be conveyed, not the obvious and well-plugged factual details, dead to any reader who hasn't been in a coal-mine, and of which the newspapers are full anyway.

His second failure is: he never gets under the skin of the miner. He accepts the surface, the first statement, obviously made 'on principle' to an inquirer. He gives no adequate impression of the moods, doubts, second thoughts, bitterness, reserves, determination, misgivings, about, for instance, nationalization, production drives, trade unions. I can imagine the reaction of the miners to his enthusiasm for production Stakhanovites, and his remark: 'But Mr. Shinwell should . . . watch the number of miners who take time off to go horse-racing when he threatens the Bevin Boys.' Horse-racing, indeed!

But after all, the book is entitled *Bevin Boy*, and does give a sketchy but honest and unpretentious record of a Bevin

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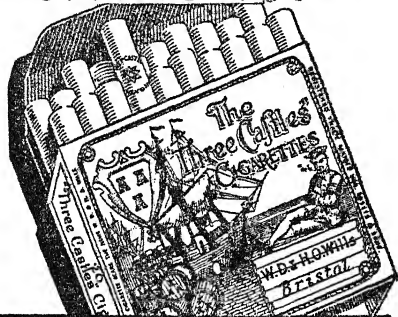
J. B. PICK

MY CHINESE WIFE. KARL ESKELUND. Illustrated by HANS BENDIX. Harrap. 10s. 6d.

HONESTY calls for a certain amount of purely factual information about this book. The writer is a Dane who has spent most of his life as a roving reporter—not perhaps a choice made entirely of his own free will, but one rather conditioned by the Viking blood which, modified with that of a Huguenot count and a Spanish deserter from Napoleon's army, he inherits from his forefathers. 'My ancestors conspired to make me a wanderer,' and in that opening sentence the key to what follows is contained. Throughout is exhibited that trick of the news correspondent who looks for an arresting phrase with which to gain the attention of the reader and which is used solely as a cover to the rather stale repetitions that come after. 'Don't forget to wipe your feet on the door mat,' begins the ninth chapter entitled 'Wine, Women, and War'. In such cases the alliteration may help to relieve the tedium, but it will do little more: it will not hide the poverty of diction nor give grace where decorum is missing, for although this type of style may enliven the more personal side of the story—the finding and wooing of his Chinese wife, Chi-yun, meaning Beautiful Cloud—it does not lend authenticity to the other side.

The nonchalance with which the comment 'I didn't know a thing about Rumania, but cheerfully went ahead and wrote long pieces about the complicated political and military situation', is hardly impressive in the light of what really is taking place in Central Europe: it is a journalist's sin of omission, because, assuming his reports gave some evidence of what is actually happening, it suggests that other accounts reaching England now about the confiscation of property and State interference may be somewhat exaggerated. Moreover, the public for which this type of autobiography is designed is exactly one whose smugness would be delighted to believe these unpleasant facts to be tarradiddles. Nor is this censure as

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carping as it may seem, since it is just this type of information that, prior to 1939, permitted the rise of National Socialism to be regarded as a myth—a myth which could draw its strength unobserved largely through the bland way it was ignored by Sunday columnists. It is therefore a pity that Karl Eskelund, who until a little while ago did such splendid work for the Press department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, might, unwittingly as it were, through the publication of this book, be thought of as an accomplice. Unfortunately, with the written word revoking is not as easy as in rhetoric, and reputations tend to stand or fall by it, so that good work—such as in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs—will not compensate for loose phraseology in the world of letters. On this score Mr. Eskelund must again be judged.

In one place the author asks: 'I wonder how many children were "planned" by their parents? I wasn't. Father once admitted it, but tactfully added that it was the best mistake he ever made.' A confession by comparison with which Edmund's admission that he was born some twelve or fourteen moon-shines lag of a brother would pale, and which hints that if honesty up to this point prompted this review, then modesty at this point had better call a halt.

NEVILLE BRAYBROOKE

THE POET'S CAT. An anthology compiled by MONA GOODEN. Harrap. 7s. 6d.

THIS is the best of several recent cat-anthologies. But there is no reason why we should not have more and even better. There is still much to do, for too much time has been spent with flowers and gardens.

Miss Gooden makes a useful classification of the cat poem into three classes: the fabulist group in which the cat is but a symbol to point a moral, the second and less attractive group which exploits the cat's obvious characteristics and failings (concern for comfort and fish, etc), and the third group of poems written by true cat-lovers. In her anthology, the first and second groups provide the better-known poems—La Fontaine (translated by Sir Edward Marsh) and John Gay, William Cowper and Thomas Gray. But the third group, with

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its whole-heartedness, gives us the best poems: the eighth-century lover of Pangur Bán, Baudelaire (translated by D. S. MacColl, who does not do so well as Edna St. Vincent Millay elsewhere), and Christopher Smart ('For the Cherub Cat is a term of the Angel Tiger').

Perhaps the one mistake in this nicely produced book was to give so much space to Miss Ruth Pitter, whose cat poems looked better in the pages of a pocket magazine, where they first appeared. Yet even some of Miss Pitter's humorous lines can turn to poignant thoughts, as when she writes: 'No hope, no dread my little grave contains, Nor anything beside my scant remains.'

OSWELL BLAKESTON

EDITORIAL

August 1947

THE man opposite me was doing his puzzle. 'If the word he is seeking were "Britain",' I wondered, 'would the clue be "camp—Butlin's or Belsen"?'

Then, as my eye travelled down the page he was holding, with its same stale news that we could all write ourselves—strikes, conductress found murdered in a bus queue, fruit allowed to rot, increased train fares, increased smashes, boot polish on points (*as boot polish?*), bombs in Palestine, war in Indonesia, laundry for export only—there came into my mind, as so often happens now, not the words I am forced to read, but those I have read elsewhere and find more full of meaning.

Two passages in particular my brain revolved, considered and extended itself in meditating upon. Both are recent pronouncements, by men whose names I will give later. The first is—

'How can man's loyalty to his own State and people and to the authority of law be reconciled with conscience and his own best instinct when such loyalties conflict? Can strength for our defence be reconciled with liberty, justice with mercy, discipline with freedom, service of the common good with each man's free pursuit of happiness! These are the questions which he states and he perceives that the solution, if there be one, must be sought in terms of spiritual values, not material success. By no increase of knowledge or of technical efficiency can we be saved.'

And the other—

'Is beauty too insubstantial to move a rational man? Let him behold it but once and thenceforward he must ever seek for it—only in it can be fulfilled his deepest need; for without beauty his spirit can no more live than his body without food. Let him be starved of beauty and at once he declines from real being. The most fleeting glimpse has the power of divine fire to cleanse and to temper; the

more lasting, to fill him with this resolve; that henceforth he will take the only way by which he can hope to know its full splendour and to live in its presence.'

Though these words deal with matters of moment, they were not made by a Minister. My readers will not need telling that they have not the ring of a politician's utterance. They were used by, respectively, J. T. Sheppard in his new book *The Wisdom of Sophocles* (Allen and Unwin, 5s.), and W. H. Murray in *Mountaineering in Scotland* (Dent, 18s.). The one dealing with Ancient Greece, the other with a modern sport, they seem at first sight poles apart. Yet they deal, finally, with the same things—man's mind and his apprehension of beauty, and I would say of Mr. Murray's book that though it does consist of detailed accounts of specific climbs, mainly in winter, on the mountains of Scotland, he is a good enough climber to be aware of, and a fine enough writer almost to express, what he calls the 'last reality'.

'The mind fails one,' he writes, 'how miserably and painfully before great beauty. It cannot understand. Yet it would contain more. Mercifully, it is by this very process of not understanding that one is allowed to understand much. . . . Find beauty; be still; and that faculty grows more surely than grain sown in season.'

Mountain literature may not be everyone's reading, but the thinking which produces such writing is, surely, stirring to all and wakens a response in all, and no one can think the Classics are 'dead' while the Provost of King's educes from them their life.

Mr. Attlee's words do not stir, as he is the first to admit. It is to be hoped that they will waken some response, but it is certain they do not deal with eternal verities—only with an economic situation. Where Mr. Attlee's critics are wrong is in thinking that his words should stir—they. Mr. Attlee knows to whom he is speaking and for those with eyes to see, there is no clearer indication of the change coming over British life than the kind of speech which her Prime Minister sees fit to deliver. He is addressing those who put him in power, the voters who gave him a vast parliamentary majority. He is preaching to the converted. Oratory would be out of place

and, what is more, it would be suspect. It would be 'using long words' to bewilder. Mr. Attlee uses short ones, simple ones, ones with no colour at all. The bewilderment is just the same, nothing is said, but those listeners he cares about are not aware. Reiteration of the same facts may not seem to get anyone much further, but it prevents people thinking they have been talked to above their heads. All religions are careful to evolve a ritual which will guard the inner mysteries from all but the initiate—and are careful, too, that there shall not be too many of those. Politics, our present religion, is no exception. What is said is not necessarily what is not meant; but what is true, what is real, is no longer said. Cause and motive are hidden, perhaps more than ever. And as paper control exercises its intangible censorship, less and less will be said that might give offence; ideas, like the fruit of our present glut, will, in times of scarcity, be left to rot, and originality and brilliance be taboo in days of uniformity.

Nevertheless, as what is called the Crisis but should more truly be called the Muddle is due to the British preference for many years of being badly governed, and as that preference is due to their spiritual state, sooner or later someone will have to take into account matters of the spirit. Facts and figures do not suffice; bribes do not replace enthusiasm nor controls and conscription breed anything but apathy. It was another Prime Minister who wrote—and again, I am indebted to J. T. Sheppard's book for the reminder—

'We are all studying science and none of us are studying ourselves. . . . What are the most brilliant of our chemical discoveries compared with the invention of fire and the metals? . . . When the tumult subsides, the Divine Truths are found as prevalent as ever, simply because they are divine.'

That was Benjamin Disraeli, and though there will be plenty to say we don't want any more of him, I think it is as well when those in charge give now and again a glimmer of understanding, in their public utterances, of the eternal things beyond the five-hour day on the one hand and a life-long shift on the other.

VERSES FROM THE FILM "MINERS ABOVE GROUND"

by GEORGE BARKER

I

Dead men and miners go underground.
Deeper than vegetables or the rock,
Than the Cro-Magnon arrowhead or sounding
Whale, deeper and darker than a black
Burial, they both go down into dirt.
But the dead stay down. We forget them.
The sometimes smiling miner of Glynneath
He comes up as murky as his shirt
Out of the belly of South Wales. Let them
Elated this Saturday be happy beneath
An unfalling bright sky. Their work is done,
Rigging a drift, riding a spake,
Cutting the seam. A week's work's done
And—fine and unlikely as a birthday cake—
These men enter the Saturday of the sun.

II

Somewhere among these mottled Welsh mountains
The undiscovered bones of the royal Arthur
Lie jostled among the coal and the rocks.
So they say, but it's all uncertain.
But what is sure is that the lovers gather
Small moments away from the bills and the punched clocks
Here in these hills. Here in these hills
The moling sapper riddles his holes of danger
And down they go, the pitboy and the driller,
Into the long dungeons where diseases of the lung or
Flood or entombment may await them. Call
Collier no workman knocking off from a job
But a man stepping up out of death in the ground.
This is why miners, more than us all,

When the work's done and the kettles on the hob,
Feel bigger than we do. For, underground,
What he leaves lying is his possible skull.

III

Evening. All wheels at rest. The engines cooling.
Shovelling arm makes love to a billiard ball.
Singing beer. Welfare Centre. The dancehall fooling.
Politics. Women. Money. And, under it all,
The black bright sleeping effigy of the coal.

IV

But happiest is the poacher in the moonlight
When the fish, as bright as money among the shadows,
Elude you, careful stalker. Sweeter
The illicit rabbit or clandestine trout
Like a bad habit or the stranger's kiss.
And under their feet echo the empty galleries
And the pit-props groan as they tread lightly
Above them, the idle spade remembers the hand,
And like a lover the anthracite waits for them nightly

V

Slaphappy Saturday of beer and skittles
Fold close your evening doors. The fun's over.
And through the midnight window pointing
Moonlight makes prizes of fish and bottles.
And the lovers, apart, are sleepless. Cover,
Large night, all Wales with your anointing
Peace. For they have earned it. Keep
Far from the miner's door the wolf and spectre,
And dreaming of next Saturday let him sleep.

WAITING FOR BERT

TOM HANLIN

WIPING sweat, Bert raised his head, and the beam from his caplamp shone on the coal sliding down the jolting pans behind the line-props. Above him stretched an expanse of roof to be timbered; ahead in the darkness of the pit bobbed the winking lights of his mates as they attacked the seam.

Wearily lifting his hammer he tapped the roof. Just a couple of props to secure it and he'd be finished for the day. Then he'd get home—if he'd a home to go to. He bent his head to search for a handy prop and it was as if his underground world went crazy.

There was a savage heart-crushing blow on his back. The floor seemed to explode and come up in a thousand pieces to blast him. A steam roller was crawling up his back, a red hot poker being thrust through his skull. A picture flashed—Jenette, his two children! His back was broken, his legs smashed, his stomach squeezing into his throat; in his head a flame, burning the last image from his mind—Jenette, and his two children.

Oh, God, oh, God, don't do this to me! Let me get home to them, or they'll be out in the street. It's the parish for them or the poorhouse. After I'm gone who'll stand up for them? Who'll see they get their chance after I'm gone? It's not for me, God, it's not for me. It's for Jenette, and my two bairns, it's for Jenette. . . .

His mind blacked out and lit up again. Steady, Bert, old boy—don't get the wind up! Lights. All around. Swinging backwards and forwards. That was the other boys working. He was all right. What had happened? Dizziness. For a second he'd suffered intolerable agony. Now it was all over. He shook himself and then he saw.

On the floor was a stone the size of a bus. It must have crashed from the roof. The edge of it had knocked him spinning. That was it. The stone had just missed him. It was a miracle. He might have been killed.

It was time he went home. Jenette would be waiting. In the road that led to the shaft bottom he threw on his jacket. Suddenly, he saw his mates rushing downwards to the place where the stone had fallen.

'It's all right,' he shouted. 'I'm here. Don't get excited.'

But nobody paid heed to him. He sat down, dreamily. They'd come back shortly. They'd find out he'd left his working place. He wanted to get away. He might find his family out in the street. Well, he'd just walk them right back in again. Let any man or woman challenge him and they'd get mowed down. It was Jenette he was concerned about. Jenette took things to heart. She worried. When he was out of her sight she lost all her spunk. The landlady knew this too. The landlady would do the throwing out when he was at work.

Jenette had asked before he left that morning: 'What if she tries it on the day, Bert?' Fear was in her face as she stood under the gaslight in the tiny sub-let room. Bert had thrown on his knapsack with a snort.

'She won't. She knows I'd sort her.' But he'd said it just to keep Jenette's heart up.

The landlady had tried it once before, once when she thought Bert was out. He happened to be below the bed, fixing some rotten floorboards.

Massive and ignorant, she stood framed in the doorway. She charged three times what the room was worth. That's why they had such a struggle to pay the rent. She stood in the doorway and said to Jenette:

'Come on, get shifted. Out you get, you and your two dirty brats. I can't be bothered with folk who don't pay their way. Gather up your orange boxes and your rags. You're flitting!'

As she spoke the landlady knew whom the neighbourhood would sympathize with. This action limelighted her greed. Hatred glinted from her eyes. You can't love the innocents who menace the comforts arising from your vices.

Jenette had shrank back to the fireplace and called: 'Bert!'

Bert just slid from below the bed and got to his feet, a confident grin on his face. 'You thought I was out, eh? Now, slide. You'll get your rent when we've got it to give you.'

And not before, either. Put on your skates before something happens to you!

Without waiting for his mates to return Bert began to walk towards the shaft bottom, a dreamy sense of freedom inside him. He hadn't gone far when he heard footsteps behind him, and there was young Macarly with his dour face, saying grudgingly: 'You're a sheeny! The Rovers weren't drawn and you get the sweep with the next best.'

Bert stopped, and in the dreamlike silence, Macarly was handing over notes and silver. 'Here's half a dollar, and let's see a smile on that dour pan o' yours, Macarly!'

But Macarly's expression never altered. Without a word, he passed on. In the shaft bottom, massed helmets and lights fronted the cages. A wild desire seized Bert to tell everybody what a great thing it was to be alive. A pound to the landlady would make everything right. He'd go up the pit and go straight past his door first thing. He'd tap at the landlady's door and when she opened up he'd say: 'There's a pound, and for the lovagod let's see the right side of your face from this on!'

Bert looked up. Why was everybody making way for Macarly? There was Macarly pushing through the crowd around the cage. He just said something and all the men opened up to let him pass. What was the reason? Bert stood where he was, a strange elation surging through him. He checked it, fixing a grim expression on his face. Wreaths of smoke began to float in front of his face. It was as if the men around him, waiting to get up the pit, belonged to another world. He was cold, colder than he had ever been, but the image was in his mind—Jenette, and his two children.

The young miner who walked along the street to the tenement looked ahead with the dour determination of a man with a purpose. He ascended the stairs, and at the end of the passage he tapped at the landlady's door. Inside, the landlady stood, massive and inquiring. He said something, stepped in, and the door shut.

Jenette looked out of the window, waiting for Bert. Only the pavements, only the road and the people passing. Her gaze switched inside again, moodily, to the youngster playing on the

rug; the row of nappies drying on the wire below the mantel-piece; the bed where the baby lay asleep; the table with the plates ready for Bert's dinner.

White ashes lay over the fireplace. She hadn't taken them out or shaken the rugs. Afraid of meeting the landlady in the passage or the stairs, she'd only been out once, furtively. When Bert came home all would be well. Bert had a short temper with awkward people.

It always astonished her how Bert had taken up with her. She couldn't believe it at first, she couldn't believe he was picking her out as the girl for him. He looked at her as if she were goodlooking; talked to her as if she were somebody. He didn't seem to know what everybody else knew and had conveyed to her in pitying glances, he didn't seem to grasp that she was just Jenette, a girl much inferior to other girls. All the time she knew he was wrong about her, oh, he was wrong. The teachers at school had often told her what she was when she came in late and bedraggled. But how could she help it when she'd been up at seven o'clock delivering milk? Because they came from better homes, too, the other girls at school didn't mince their words to her.

Her father and mother glared at her savagely when she came in with her pay from the brickwork where she'd started when she was thirteen. 'A lousy fifteen bob a week! When I was your age, I was earning double that!'

And her younger brothers and sisters took their cue from the father and mother. 'Go on, you! Stuffin' your turkey with the best, and only earning fifteen bob!'

Jenette never spoke, never retorted. They were right. She couldn't help it. She did her best, but she couldn't make any more. She stood in the shed all day with dust blowing in her eyes, lifting the endless bricks that popped out on the ledge, one every second. Lifting the soft unburned bricks and placing them on the truck at her side. The endless bricks and the endless trucks! They made you dizzy. And outside the shed the sun would be shining. She couldn't make any more. She just got tireder and tireder. And there would be a pile of bricks on the plates below, spoiled bricks that had fallen because she hadn't been quick enough to catch them. And the foreman

would shout at her. With her hanky tied around her hair, the brickdust thick on her face and eyelashes, she worked like a robot, trying to keep back the tears.

She could see how people edged away from her when she went home from work. In her torn raincoat, with the steel-shod men's boots on her feet, she was a sight. She took all the back roads and the back streets. She walked with her eyes on the road, never looking up, because if she looked up she would see amazement and contempt in people's eyes.

Once when it was raining she got into a bus to go home, and further along the bus had picked up Bert. He was a startling figure getting into a bus, with his chest a yard broad, his miner's helmet tilted to one side and his round black face alive with confidence and vitality.

You could see all the passengers shrinking when they looked at him. He strode into the passage beside Jenette and stood. There were no seats. There wasn't an atom of self-consciousness about him.

He grinned at Jenette. 'Hullo, Jenette! Always goin' with the same fella yet? Gimme the wire when you throw him over!' His voice boomed through the bus. He came from another part of the town and Jenette knew him distantly. It startled her that he should notice her and be aware of her name.

When the conductress came up wrinkling her nose, he took out fourpence. 'Two tuppennies. One for me and one for my girl.'

That had been their first real meeting. Then Bert began to come along and hang about the tenement where she lived. It looked as if he was just kicking around with the other boys, but whenever Jenette appeared on the scene, his eye lit up. Then it became natural for him to come for her and there was hell to pay when they announced they were getting married. Her mother had a fainting fit on the stairhead when the news was broken to her. 'This is what I get! I rear that bitch on the very best, and just when she begins to earn money, she tells me she's taking a man! No profit for her poor mother, no profit! She needs a man whoever looks at her.'

Her father slapped her across the face. Jenette just hung her head. But she couldn't hide the black eye from Bert. When he learned what had happened, he went straight up and laid a

few bunches of knuckles on her father's nose. Bert was fined a fiver for assault and battery.

Jenette found the door barred against her that night. She knew nowhere else, and her nature wouldn't permit her to go anywhere else. She dozed on the stone stair all night, and was sent to her work as usual next morning.

On the day they were to be married Bert had only a couple of pounds, so there was only one thing to do. He had to chance his luck at the pitch-and-toss school. He headed three pair. A man could now get married decently on sixteen pounds. Bert was the boy!

When he was around Jenette wasn't afraid any more. It was only when he was absent that she relapsed. Bert had never found out that she was just Jenette. She'd seen to that.

After the first wild incredulous recognition of his attitude, she had deliberately deceived him, gone out of her way to conceal the fact that she was just Jenette. She bought lipstick and face-cream, and it cost her all her shilling pocket money for this. She put her hair in curl papers before going to bed. At first she wouldn't go out with Bert. She couldn't. She had no clothes. All she had was a washed cotton blouse and a skirt. They just hung about the tenement entries and stairs. Bert got the idea because she always refused to go for a walk or to the pictures, he got the idea that she was select in her choosings, and he'd better come up to scratch, or else. Then she got a coat—new, the first she'd ever had, and she went out with him and with the coat on. And as she walked down the street that first time she trembled all over. It wasn't right, she had no right to be decked out like this. She could hardly look up, for undoubtedly she would see in the eyes of the world amazed hostility, and something terrible might happen to her for her colossal presumption. But Bert had seen nothing wrong; confident and alive, he swaggered by her side, every step telling the world that this was his girl he had out, and take a look everybody and you'll see something.

To this day he had never realized she was just Jenette. With Bert she was right for life. Bert was protection, her ring-wall against a hostile and menacing world.

Moving from the window she sat down on the threadbare

rug beside young Bert. Taking the brush he was playing with, she pretended to hide it behind her. Young Bert stood up and made baby chuckling motions to retrieve his treasure. They wrestled playfully as she allowed him to grip it.

The other baby on the bed made a sudden noise, as if awakened by the sound of heavy boots sounding in the passage outside. Jenette looked at the bed, but the baby slept on. Then she turned to the door, expecting its swing to reveal Bert. But the heavy tramp passed on. It wasn't Bert. It was somebody who had business with landlady. She wondered who it could be. Bert wouldn't be long now.

She put her arms around young Bert and pretended to go to sleep with her cheek against his. An old song came into her mind and she began crooning softly. With the candid stare of a child safe in his mother's arms, he lay in the crook of her arm, watching her lips. She stopped, looked at him for a moment, then she smiled. He smiled back, and wriggling, buried his curly head between her breasts. Smoothing the back of his head with her hand, she bent to kiss his hair, happiness in her lips and pain beneath the lowered lids of her eyes. A sudden soft rap at the door made her heart swerve.

With a swift and startled look at the scuffed panels, her hand went to her mouth. Infected by her fear, young Bert whimpered as he cuddled into her. Surely it couldn't be the landlady? The landlady wouldn't choose this time, just when Bert was coming home, to throw her out in the street.

'Come in,' she said. The door opened, and the landlady, massive and serious, was framed in the threshold.

Jenette's heart ducked. She held young Bert tightly. Under the hair on the back of her neck she felt his tiny hand tremble as it crept around. In the pit of her stomach was a cold, paralysing feeling. From her sitting position on the rug, over the top of the boy's head, she saw the landlady tower like the herald of some approaching calamity. The air was electric with impending horror.

'It's just me, lassie!' From outside, down below in the street, came the noise of a heavy truck passing. At the foot of the stairs, children were playing and their voices echoed wordlessly. Small sounds of people behind shut doors, doing small

things—heedless and careless reminders of a world going about its business, as if this moment with its engulfing horror were just an ordinary moment.

The landlady's voice was soft, the voice of a friend. But Jenette knew, she'd been knocked kicking before by things that looked like velvet. It was always the unexpected. What kind of backhanded slap was being handed out to her this time?

'I just thought I'd come in and see ye, Jenette.'

There was nothing to say. Gasping out what her whole soul was concentrated on, Jenette said: 'I'm waiting for Bert. Bert should be home any minute.' She could feel the youngster's arm softly encircling her neck, the trembling of the little fingers recording on her skin.

'Waiting for Bert, hen? So ye are.' The landlady closed the door and came inside, looking round the small, untidy room. 'And you're in a bit o' a muddle. Now I'll help ye to tidy up. Will ye let me help ye, Jenette?'

Jenette's eyes filled with tears. It was all right. Everything was all right. What she had always wanted, and had never got from anybody but Bert—friendship, love, kindness—here it was, being offered to her. And she couldn't bear it. She couldn't stand it. She wasn't worth it. The landlady's figure broadened and narrowed and shimmered. Jenette got up from the rug slowly, holding her child in her arms, two hot lines burning her cheeks, trembling with happiness.

'Bert'll be pleased,' she choked. 'Bert likes to see me getting on with neighbours.'

The manager looked up from his desk at the miners sitting around in his pithead cabin. Steam blew past his window, and the heavy sound of rattling pithead gear shook the wooden walls.

'Let's hear what you saw, Jamie.'

Jamie scratched dried blood from his horny palm. His voice was a monotone. 'I just happened to look up to where he was at. I seen him lift his hammer to tap the roof. Then the roof roared down on top of him. I ran up and saw a stone the size of a bus lying there. His boots were sticking out below it.'

'He said something after you got him out, just before he died. What was it?'

'Just nonsense. Just ravings. He said: "Here's a half a dollar." And just before he pegged out he said, and it was as clear as ye like—"There's a pound, and for the lovagod let's see the right side of your face from this on." It was just a man out of his mind with the smashing he got.'

The manager nodded.

'I sent that dour young chap—what's his name—Macarly, to where the wife stops. Macarly said he wouldn't break the news to the wife for a million. But he said he'd go in and ask the landlady to do it. He said he'd go in and get the landlady to break the news.'

IPHIS

by P. J. HELM

Straight, self-possessed, firm and complete,
She was the monument to all his hopes,
The lofty beacon of his happy days,
Unspoilt. A landmark would not stand
More solitary and certain set to show
Forgotten boundaries of a golden age.

She was not one that should encounter change:
Grime should not darken,
Neither neglect nor blast should tumble down
This perfect fact.

This he had planned. But his quiet heart
Betrayed him. Now he stands for ever chained
To that live flesh he made a monument.

P. J. HELM was born in 1916 and educated at St. Bees School. During the war he served for five years in the National Fire Service, and is now teaching at Queen's College, Taunton, Somerset. His main interests are modern painting and travel, 'preferably in areas full of what Gerald Manley Hopkins called "wildness and wet!"'

THE SUNSET SHIP

KEATS, COLERIDGE, AND TURNER

JACK LINDSAY

THE painters who most strongly affected the Gothic novelists and the minor poets preluding the major romantic outburst, were the *Tenebrosi*, the masters of self-consciously impressive light-and-shade, the flamboyant or luscious purveyors of chiaroscuro. Salvator Rosa with his wild settings, Guido Reni or Carlo Dolci with their sweetly-holy light suffusing maidenly faces, Claude with his classical landscapes tinged mellowly in autumnal or evening hues. Keats in *The Castle-Builder* admits his agreement with the advanced popular sensibility:

My pictures all Salvator's, save a few
Of Titian's portraiture, and one, though new,
Of Haydon's in its fresh magnificence . . .

And he unpacks his clearest statement of the personal crisis which he never fully resolved, in *Reminiscences of Claude's Enchanted Castle*. He begins with a light-hearted exercise of dream-fancy, evokes in a few pellucid lines the pure classical, then warms and speeds up his colours till the hellenic ship burns into a romantic golden galley emerging out of 'the distance dim' with momentary flash of oars 'into the verdurous bosom of those isles; towards the shade. . . .' This image wakes a cry of nostalgia:

O, that our dreamings all, of sleep or wake,
Would all their colours from the sunset take;
From something of material sublime
Rather than shadow our own soul's day-time
In the dark void of night. For in the world
We jostle . . .

The simple dream-transformation will not suffice. The world still jostles. Keats is oppressed with great issues which he

cannot clarify but which he feels are at the core of reality. So he summons up the Eve-image a second time.

Dear Reynolds, I have a mysterious tale,
And cannot speak it: the first page I read
Upon a lampit rock of green seaweed
Among the breakers, 'twas a quiet eve . . .

This time it is the actual world he invokes, a terrible scene of ravening violence. Into the next stages of his argument I shall not follow him. This note is concerned with the import of the sunset-ship on which he centralizes his picture of a happy world, a world created by art, but which seems to him at this moment only a veil across the ravening evil. He asks why life cannot halt at this point of beauty; and answers that it cannot halt there. But why does he select the sunset-ship to express his conviction of the promises of beauty, the momentarily successful power of art to cheat him out of thought?

If we look back to a poem written by Savage in 1734, *The Genius of Liberty*, we find a description of Dawn, which Savage identifies with the England-to-be, where Liberty and Industry will have created a splendid land of peace and prosperity. And this description is centralized on a light-movement:

Where the last billow swells into the sky,
Where in gay vision round the horizon's line
The moving clouds with various beauty shine,
As dropping from their bosom, tinged with gold,
Shoots forth a sail.

And in a poet of the 1790's we find the image recurring:

Just where the horizon bends to meet the wave,
Within the farthest reach of human ken,
A Sail appeared. The mild ray far beaming
From the Western Sky glanced on her canvas.¹

2

These lines by Gilbert affected his friend Coleridge, and contributed towards the imagery of *The Ancient Mariner*:

¹ Gilbert, *The Hurricane: a Theosophical and Western Eclogue*, 22.

The western wave was all a-flame.
The day was well nigh done.
Almost upon the western wave
Rested the broad bright Sun;
When that strange thing drove suddenly
Betwixt us and the Sun.

Here the ship of promise, the ship of hope, has become the ominous sunset-ship of fear; and into Coleridge's image went many elements of pictorial tradition, of popular fancy, and of personal dream-emotion. Lowes collects instances of the ghost-ship of superstition. 'In the majority of these accounts,' says Gaidoz, 'the fantastic ship appears a little before the setting of the sun.' Thus, the death-ship seen at New Haven, Connecticut, in June, 1647, came 'about an Hour before Sun-set'. But what directly kindled Coleridge's imagination was his friend Cruickshank's 'strange dream' in which he 'fancied he saw a skeleton ship, with figures in it'. And Wordsworth pointed out, after the event, an actual light-effect seen from the Valley of Rocks, Lynton, which was like an illustration of the poem—'the bare masts of a vessel on the very edge of the horizon and within the red-orbed disk of the setting sun, like his own spectre-ship.'¹

3

But Coleridge and his friends were not at all alone in thus being fascinated by the sunset-ship. If we turn to the Gothic Novel and the sensibility-literature we find that the imagery of Evening plays a central part in the emotional evocations and that the ship of the dusk, picked out by a dramatic finger of light, continually shows up. Thus in *The Mysteries of Udolpho* Anne Radcliffe has eight poems of her own, and in almost every case some part of our imagery-complex can be traced. First (ch. i) we get the shipwreck-motive attached to the farewell-moment of Eve.

The breeze of eve moans low, her smile is o'er
Dim steals her twilight down the crimson west:

¹ Lowes, *Road to Xanadu* 162 f., 202, 276; H. Gaidoz, *Melusine*, ii, 164; Coleridge, *Poems* (1852), 383 f.; Wordsworth, *Works*, xii, 272 f.

THE SUNSET SHIP

He climbs the top-most mast, to seek once more
The far-seen coast, where all his wishes rest.
He views its dark line on the distant sky
And fancy leads him to his little home . . .

And the ship sinks that night. In ch. iii comes a poem on a butterfly seen 'sailing low', which is ushered in by a prose-paragraph describing 'through a distant opening, a glimpse of the blue waters of the Mediterranean, with the white sail gliding on its bosom'. In ch. x, emerging from a picture of 'the gradual effect of evening over the extensive prospect, till the grey waters of the Mediterranean and the massy woods were almost the only features of the scene that remained visible', comes the *Song of the Evening Hour*, where the ship is missing but:

my only guide
His faint ray dawning on the farthest sky . . .
And slumbering ocean faint and fainter glows.

And the prose begins again with 'The moon was now rising out of the sea. She watched its gradual progress, the extending line of radiance it threw upon the waters, the sparkling oars, the sail faintly silvered . . .'. In ch. xii, we get *Shipwreck*, with the climax:

In the still pauses of the gust I hear
The voice of spirits, rising sweet and slow,
And oft amid the clouds their forms appear.
But hark! what shriek of death comes in the gale,
And in the distant ray what glimmering sail
Bends to the storm?

Next in ch. xvi we get the recession of light-effects centralized on the far-seen sail:

Thy farewell smile, with fond regret, I view,
Thy beaming lights, soft gliding o'er the woods,
Thy distant landscape, touch'd with yellow hue,
While falls the lengthen'd gleam; thy winding floods,
Now veil'd in shade, save where the skiff's white sails
Swell to the breeze, and catch thy streaming ray.

The way in which the sail-image is both an emotional climax and pictorial completion is shown in the last two poems. After

the sail bending to the storm comes, 'Now sinks the note of fear.' After the sail which catches the streaming ray come the lines:

But now, e'en now, the partial vision fails,
And the wave smiles, as sweeps the cloud away.

Technically, Keats learned much from that Radcliffian effect, as the last stanzas of *The Eve of St. Agnes* and the *Nightingale Ode* reveal.

The next *Udolpho* poem is on a Bat, another elaborate evening-picture, concluding 'Twilight thy love, thy guide her beaming star'. Sea and ship are missing, but there is a certain affinity to our complex in the final movement out to the distant star over the horizon. Next (ch. xx) comes a poem to the Winds inspired by a glance over 'the wide waters seen dimly beneath the last shade of twilight', where the shipwreck theme reappears:

Bear not the crash of bark far on the main
Bear not the cry of men, who cry in vain,
The crew's dread chorus sinking into death . . .
As rapt I climb these dark romantic steps,
The elemental wars, the billow's moan . . .

Finally (ch. xxiii) the introductory prose to *To Melancholy* brings up again the sea-prospect ('opposite to a small grated window, which, like the wood-tops beneath, and the waves lower still, gleamed with the red glow of the west'), and in the poem itself the imagery of eve and moonlight leads to:

Or guide me where the dashing oar
Just breaks the stillness of the vale,
As slow it tracks the winding shore
To meet the ocean's distant sail.

And as if that were not enough, the poem ends two stanzas later with the same image:

And catch the fleeting moonlight's pow'r,
O'er foaming seas and distant sail.

Then the following prose resumes the same elements in less intense form: 'The soft tranquillity of the scene below, where

the evening breeze scarcely curled the water, or swelled the passing sail that caught the last gleam of the sun, and where, now and then, a dipping oar was all that disturbed the trembling radiance, conspired with the tender melody of her lute to lull her mind. . . .'

This brief analysis of the poems of *Udolpho* shows an astonishing persistence of our imagery-cluster, which certainly lies at the core of the Radcliffian æsthetic. And *Udolpho*, it must be remembered, is one of the key-books in the sensibility-imagery of the period. Its agreement with both Keats and Coleridge in the use of the sunset-ship is therefore of extreme importance.

4

We have already noticed that this use of centralizing light-effect in a dusk-landscape by the poets has its parallel in the methods of the *Tenebroso* in art. Keats turned to Claude, and contemporary opinion linked Mrs. Radcliffe with the paintings of the *Tenebroso*. Thus Nathan Drake in his *Literary Hours*, 1798 (No. 15), calls her 'The Shakespeare of Romance Writers, and who to the wild landscape of Salvator Rosa has added the softer graces of a Claude'. And in the anonymous *Epistle in Rhyme to M. G. Lewis* (1798) we find:

Thou notest, like Radcliffe, with a painter's eye
The pine-clad mountains and the stormy sky,
And at thy bidding, to my wondering view,
Rise the bold scenes Salvator's pencil drew.

If we turn now from poetry to painting, it becomes clear that our imagery-complex gives us the key to certain basic elements of the creative impulse in Turner. Ruskin in *Modern Painters* discusses how Covent Garden and Wapping affected Turner's boyhood, and how his life throughout was permeated by his memories of seacraft, sky and water, 'that mysterious forest below London Bridge.' And it is no exaggeration to say that the image of the sunset-ship is basic in Turner's whole development. The two aspects of the ship-of-light, hope and fear, were always present in his mind in his treatment of seascape. When he painted the gay *Sun of Venice Going to Sea*, he added verses of his own composition as a contrasting motto:

Nor heeds the Demon that in grim repose
Expects his evening prey.

Ruskin stresses the way in which Turner in all his mature seascapes conveys with the ship a sense of danger, of human preparations inadequate to counter that Demon waiting on the horizon of the dusk. 'There is invariably a feeling about his vessels of strange awe and danger; the sails are in some way loosening, or flapping as if in fear. . . . From the year 1818, when first he saw a ship rent asunder, he never beheld one at sea, without, in his mind's eye, at the same instant, seeing her skeleton. But he had seen more than the death of the ship. He had seen the sea feed her white flames on the souls of men.'¹

This closeness of attitude in Coleridge and Turner has not been noted; but clearly it is of the utmost importance if we are to grasp at the heart the creative impulses of our Romantic Movement. How lasting was Turner's conviction of a profound spiritual significance in the sea-demon, the sunset-ship, was proved by the fact that his last completed oil-painting was *Wreck and Buoy*, and the last large-scale work he carried out was the sunset-vision of *The Old Téméraire*.² But his correlation

¹ J. Timbs, *Anecdotal Biog.* (1860), ii, 359 (summarizing Ruskin).

² The direct symbolism of the sunset here is noted by Burnet (*Turner and His Works*) and related to Haydon's *Bonaparte Musing at St. Helena and Wellington on the Field of Waterloo*; he adds that Turner used to delight to go to sea in rough weather, with smugglers or fishermen, whose trade is with storms. One of his storm-pictures was *The Wreck of the Minotaur*, which so impressed Admiral Bowles. (The episode when during a storm Turner had himself tied to the mast—if he sank, he sank; if he lived, he'd have the analysis of the storm—is characteristic.) C. R. Leslie, *Handbook* (1865), 273, writes: 'Claude could not paint a storm. Turner's sea-storms are the finest ever painted,' and picks out his sea-work as the work which is entirely his own. Ruskin in his text to T.'s *Harbours of England* (1856) finds T.'s full strength and joy throughout his career in his pictures with ships. I cite these cases to illustrate the contemporary reactions.

of sunset-effect and ship was much earlier than 1818; for the two earliest works in which he can be said to have broken through into his personal expression were entitled *Fishermen coming ashore at sunset previous to a gale* (1796) and *Fishermen, becalmed, twilight, previous to a storm* (1797). That I am not over-emphasizing the import of these works will be made clear by the reactions of a man who visited the exhibitions where they

were first shown. Thomas Greene, of Ipswich, writes in his *Diary*:

2nd June, 1797. Visited the Royal Exhibition. Particularly struck with a seaview by Turner: fishing vessels coming in, with a heavy swell, in apprehension of a tempest gathering in the distance, and casting, as it advances, a night of shade, while a parting glow is spread with fine effect upon the shore. The whole composition is bold in design, and masterly in execution. I am entirely unacquainted with the artist; but if he proceeds as he has begun, he cannot fail to become the first in his department.

3rd June, 1799. Visited the Royal Exhibition, and was again struck and delighted with Turner's landscapes; particularly with fishermen in an evening; a calm before a storm, which all Nature attests is silently preparing, and seems in deathlike stillness to await; and Carnarvon Castle, the sun setting in gorgeous splendour behind its shadowy towers. The latter in water-colours, to which he has given a depth and force of tone, which I have never before conceived attainable with such untoward implements. Turner's views are not mere ordinary transcripts of Nature—he always throws some peculiar and striking character into the scene he represents.¹

This account shows how directly a sensitive contemporary could realize Turner's intention, his new focus, and how centrally the sunset-image, particularly in relation to sea and ships, played its part in bringing that new focus about.

The number of pictures in which Turner painted storm-light at sea is legion. Thus in the first year of his Associateship of the Academy the pictures considered most successful were '*Dutch Boats in a Gale*, his *Pembroke Castle*—a thunderstorm approaching; his *Fishermen on Lee-shore in squally weather*; and his view of Loch Lomond, with its wild Ossianic effect'. To sum up this aspect of Turner's work I cannot do better than cite Ruskin again, on *The Slave-Ship* (1840), in which the drama of water and storm-light achieves a terrific intensity. Ruskin's comments show how an admirer, still close in time to Turner, felt the intention and definition of such a work. He begins by saying that if he had to choose any single work on which to base his high claims for Turner, it would be this painting.

¹ *Extracts from the Diary of a Lover of Literature*. The quotation in the next paragraph is from Timbs, ii, 327.

It is sunset on the Adriatic, after prolonged storm; but the storm is partially lulled, and the torn and streaming rainclouds are moving in scarlet lines to lose themselves in the hollow of the night. The whole surface of sea included in the picture is divided into two ridges of enormous swell, not high, nor local, but a low, broad heaving of the whole ocean, like the lifting of its bosom by deep-drawn breath after the torture of the storm.

Between these two ridges the fire of the sunset falls along the trough of the sea, dyeing it with an awful but glorious light, the intense and lurid splendour of which burns like gold and bathes like blood. Along this fiery path and valley the tossing waves by which the swell of the sea is restlessly divided, lift themselves in dark indefinite fantastic forms, each casting a faint and ghastly shadow behind it along the illuminated foam. They do not rise everywhere, but three or four together in wild groups, fitfully and furiously, as the under-strength of the swell compels or permits them; leaving between them treacherous spaces of level and whirling water, now lighted with green and lamplike fire, now flashing back the gold of the declining sun, now fearfully dyed from above with the indistinguishable images of burning clouds, which fall upon them in flakes of crimson and scarlet, and give to the reckless waves the added motion of their own fiery flying.

Purple and blue, the lurid shadows of the hollow breakers are cast upon the mist of the night, which gathers cold and low, advancing like the shadow of death upon the guilty ship as it labours amidst the lightning of the sea, its thin masts written upon the sky in lines of blood, girded with condemnation in that fearful hue which signs the sky with horror, and mixes its foaming flood with the sunlight—and, cast far along the desolate heave of the sepulchral waves, incarnadines the multitudinous sea.¹

There is the skeleton-ship in the full drama of its sunset-apotheosis.

5

We can learn yet more of the way in which Turner seeks to integrate theme and lighting-effect, if we look at the mysterious poem, known to us in the fragments attached to his pictures, over which he clearly spent much time and trouble. *The Fallacies of Hope* was its title. The way in which he

¹ This was a favourite passage of declamation by William Morris in his Oxford days (Mackail, *Life*).

clung to this title proves that it had some meaning which he found satisfying, illuminating his pictorial intention.

Consider the tag attached to *Aeneas Relating his Story to Dido*. 'Fallacious hope beneath the moon's pale crescent shone.' The emotional content of 'fallacious hope' is directly identified with the light-effect. The fact that from a literary viewpoint Turner knows Aeneas is raising 'fallacious hopes' in Dido's heart gives him an easy excuse for merging the ostensible theme (the lovers) with the æsthetic theme, the light-effect. Then, on the other side of the light-effect, there re-emerges the ostensible theme, shorn of its superficial literary aspects, in a total effect of transformed Nature. I do not see how else one can explain the peculiar use Turner is making of the verse to bring into consciousness a sense of aim which he obviously feels it necessary to grasp in words, but for which he can find no analytic term.

The verse is a sort of cryptogram, which Turner himself cannot decipher, but which helps him to stabilize his total intention. For that total intention goes both beyond anything he can state in terms of the ostensible theme (the lovers, Dido and Aeneas, an historical painting taken from the *Aeneid*), and beyond anything he can state in terms of the artistic problem (taking that phrase in its limited sense). The verse gives him the clue to the total significance of the painting, in which Man and Nature, Form and Content, are indivisible. The ostensible theme has given him his starting-point, and from it he has moved into the artistic problem, the rendering of a certain light-effect; but the total intention, while needing these two elements, yet at every point integrates them in a fuller meaning, from which the creative impulse comes and to which it returns. This movement of transformation, in which the human and the natural elements are fused, is uttered by Turner in the rather weak line, 'Fallacious hope beneath the moon's pale crescent shone,' which, taken in relation to the whole action of the picture, becomes powerful, revelatory.¹

¹ It was no accident that Ruskin, soaked in Turner, coined the phrase *Pathetic Fallacy* to define the emotional attribution of human emotion to Nature.

Approached from this angle, Turner's verse is of the greatest interest and throws an extraordinary light on his creative processes. I have already cited above his lines about the *Sun of Venice Going to Sea*. Now we can more fully appreciate the insight they give us of the complex attitude of Turner towards his material. His attitude, which looks on light-changes as symbols of a total movement which includes both human emotion and physical process, is continually revealed. Thus, on his *Opening of the Walhalla* he writes:

But Peace returns—the morning ray
Beams on the Walhalla, reared to science and the arts.

On *The Visit to the Tomb* he writes: 'The sun went down in wrath at such deceit.' In the Walhalla-tag the light-effect is for once in simple unison with the theme—dawn-burst and human regeneration. But in the *Visit* we recur to the conflict between hopes and cheats, consciousness and unconsciousness. It is as if Turner was intent in these tags in stating the three-fold movement of his mind in the creative act, and in insisting that the conflict which that act had to resolve was rooted deep both in human life and in nature itself.

The lines for his pair of ark-pictures excellently show his poetic method. *Shade and Darkness: The Evening of the Deluge* gives us the dusk of danger, the sign of woe unheeded:

The moon put forth her sign of woe unheeded,
And the last token came; the giant framework floated;
The scared birds forsook their nightly shelter, screaming,
And the beasts waded to the ark.

Completing that, stands the image of renewal, the bubbles of light against the lost forms. *Light and Colour: The Morning after the Deluge*.

The ark stood firm on Ararat; the returning sun
Exhaled earth's humid bubbles, and emulous of light,
Reflected her lost forms, each in prismatic guise.

The Departure of the Trojan Fleet once more invokes the contrast between the hopes and acts of men, the peace and poison of the scene embodied in the light-effect:

The orient moon shone on the departing fleet,
Nemesis invoked, the priest held the poisoned cup.

The Vision of Medea has exactly the same contrast:

Or Medea, who in the full tide of witchery,
Had lured the dragon, gained her Jason's love,
Had fill'd the spell-bound bowl with Aeson's life,
Yet dash'd it to the ground, and raised the poisonous snake
High in the jaundiced sky to writhe its murderous coil,
Infuriate in the wreck of hope withdrew,
And in the fired palace her twin offspring threw.

There the epithet 'jaundiced', applied to the sky, makes the fusion between nature and the human conflict with its 'wreck of hope'. In *Caligula's Palace and Bridge, Bay of Baia*, the contrast is between the reviving dawnlight and the wreck of hope:

What now remains of all the mighty bridge
Which made the Lucerne lake an inner pool,
Caligula, but massy fragments left
As monuments of doubt and ruined hopes
Yet gleaming in the morning's ray . . .

Snow-storm, Hannibal and his Army crossing the Alps states the same contrasts in more active form; and again the keyword *hope* fuses human actor and light-effect (here the sun veiled with snow):

Craft, treachery, and fraud—Salassian force
Hung on the fainting rear; then plunder seized
The victor and the captive—Saguntum's spoil
Alike became their prey; still the chief advanced.
Looked on the sun with hope; low, broad, and wan.
While the fierce archer of the downward year
Stains Italy's blanched barrier with storms.
In vain each pass, ensanguined deep with dead,
Or rocky fragments, wide destruction roll'd.

War—The Exile and the Rock Limpet shows a yet more complex series of correspondences. The man and the limpet, the sunset-red and the blood of battle, the shell and the tent—and then the violent point of cleavage. The light-effect which unifies also cleaves apart; the sense of union is achieved only.

Ah! thy tent-formed shell is like
A soldier's nightly bivouac, alone
Amidst a sea of blood—
but you can join your comrades.

6

The reason for the title *Fallacies of Hope* will now be clear. It was no accidental choice that led Turner to the phrase. The idea of conflict between hope and achievement, between conscious and unconscious, realized in terms of changing light-effects, was basic in his art and was the form in which he directly expressed his conviction of the living unity of man and nature—a unity which could reveal itself only in a series of conflicts before the art-image achieved its significant resolution. A unity which was also a conflict; a realization of organic polarities. These poetic tags, of which Turner was extremely proud and which have been ridiculed by critics are the key to the profound workings of his spirit.¹

The kinship which we have found between Keats, Coleridge, and Turner is fundamental. It enables us to understand the way in which they evolved and developed their symbolism. In grasping it we grasp the innermost creative energy of the Romantic Movement.²

¹ In his youth Turner was an admirer of Thomson's *Seasons*, and put passages from that poem to four of his early paintings. One (of Dunstamborough Castle) deals with sunrise after a stormy night, and has the lines: "The briny deep, Seen from some pointed promontory's top, Far to the blue horizon's utmost verge. Restless, reflects a floating gleam."

² Note the key-lyric of Lermontov's in which the poet is the lone white sail on the horizon, seeking peace in the storm-heart.

CARATACUS

By HENRY TREECE

Sometimes I think of summer: two white doves
Held for an instant by the pool, present
Fading to past with each wing's fall;
The vine, pushing its tendril-fingers through
The trellises, wrapping in leaves the memory
Of other summers, earlier sunlit days
When the gay boats came in, white against blue,
Filling the sleepy town with song and wine
And letting fall the gold coins of a tale
In every gutter; quick Levantine and timeless African,
Jostling for trinkets, swapping wounds and wars,
Full of the myth of bulls and flower-decked girls.

Here, there is talk of little but the past,
Dim Lupercal and bloody knife-gashed robe.
'The night before he died a lioness
Whelped in the street, and all the graves
Gave up their dead.' They tell me then
How the Gaul's tongue burst from his twisted head
After the Triumph, and slap my back
To show how times have changed, praise my swift hounds
And compliment my crops. 'You folk
Knew more than Caesar gave you credit for.'
So talk falls back to fashion, and they ask
If I approve of the new flaxen wigs
That Claudius has introduced at Court;
Where might they get a tartan spun like mine?
And would a golden gorget show bad taste?

O Cartismandua, I remember you, old trollop
Of the tribes. Sometimes, in the night,
Through harp's thin questioning to flute,
I see your white lips smiling, hear your key
Turn in the lock, and crouch again in the straw

As the dread hoof-beats clatter to my door.
 Old vixen, as I watch my Syrian boy
 Preparing chickens for the evening meal,
 I call to mind the whiteness of your throat.
 I grind the pictured pavement with my heel.

But for the maddening mead of hills and the sky,
 Salt spume, and salmon leaping in the blood,
 I should have kept my counsel, held my tongue
 When the caged spirit moved it, knowing well
 That wounded lion will vent his rage on rats
 Or pent-in lightning strike a babbling child.
 Boasting my head off round the hunting board,
 These things went from me. No one ever thought
 That Rome's far-distant ear could listen through
 The cracks that summer had left in our walls.

Under the hill I watched the grey dogs run
 Howling along the skyline. Wood-fire's rustic scent
 Rose from the village. Woad dried in the sun.
 The oyster-fishers sang of record hauls.
 Yet though gaunt Oakmen calling from the dusk
 Predicted visitors, they never told
 Of dark men taking Camulodonum,
 And snuffling camels slouching through the rain,
 Causing our native chargers to kick loose
 And overturn the chariots, a sour smell
 Hanging about the lanes, frightening the kine.

Then came the long night ride towards the west,
 To a land of stone and sheep-dung, where the men
 Fell back before our horses, whispering
 Behind their hands and watching in the dark,
 Grinning at our urgency, our words
 Skimming like curlews over their black heads,
 Only superior arms meaning a thing,
 And they meaning midnight marches, leaping flames
 And waiting without sleep behind mud walls.

It lasted many years. Yet here, beneath the sun,
Leaning over marble balustrades
To talk with scented thinkers in a tongue
That has more traps than gaudy peacock eyes,
I lose the cold, the screaming phalanxes,
My brother with an arrow in his throat,
Even the witch who gave me friendly wine
While her black word called wolves to my bedside.
And then, at last, that stuttering Emperor,
Crowned clown, who envied my quick speech,
Granting pardon for the way I wore my chains.

So, sitting by my sun-kissed trellis-vines,
Rough homespun Squire, I watch the fluttering doves
And dream of tall ships steering for the north:
And I would willingly exchange these perfumed rooms,
The jewelled fruits and fragile porcelain,
For raw sun rising and the sound
Of gong's roar carried on the morning wind,
The misty horn, comfort of knife's hard haft;
The sacrifice still twitching in my hand
Under the great, the everlasting stones.

THE RETURN

BRENDA CHAMBERLAIN

It isn't as if the Captain took reasonable care of himself, said the postmaster.

No, she answered. She was on guard against anything he might say.

A man needs to be careful with a lung like that, said the postmaster.

Yes, she said. She waited for sentences to be laid like baited traps. They watched one another for the next move. The man lifted a two-ounce weight from the counter and dropped it with fastidious fingers into the brass scale. As the tray fell, the woman sighed. A chink in her armour. He breathed importantly and spread his hands on the counter. From pressure on the palms, dark veins stood up under the skin on the backs of his hands. He leaned his face to the level of her eyes. Watching him, her mouth fell slightly open.

The Captain's lady is very nice indeed; Mrs. Morrison is a charming lady. Have you met his wife, Mrs. Ritsin?

No, she answered; she has not been to the Island since I came. She could not prevent a smile flashing across her eyes at her own stupidity. Why must she have said just that, a ready-made sentence that could be handed on without distortion. She has not been to the Island since I came. Should she add: no doubt she will be over soon; then I shall have the pleasure of meeting her? The words would not come. The postmaster lodged the sentence carefully in his brain ready to be retailed to the village.

They watched one another. She, packed with secrets behind that innocent face, damn her, why couldn't he worm down the secret passages of her mind? Why had she come here in the first place, this Mrs. Ritsin? Like a doll, so small and delicate, she made you want to hit or pet her, according to your nature. She walked with small strides, as if she owned the place, as if she was on equal terms with man and the sea. Her eyes disturbed something in his nature that could not bear the

light. They were large, they looked further than any other eyes he had seen. They shone with a happiness that he thought indecent in the circumstances.

Everyone knew, the whole village gloated and hummed over the fact that Ceridwen had refused to live on the Island and that she herself was a close friend of Alec Morrison. But why, she asked herself, why did she let herself fall into their cheap traps? The sentence would be repeated almost without a word being altered, but the emphasis, O my God, the stressing of the *I*, to imply a malicious woman's triumph. But all this doesn't really matter, she told herself, at least it won't once I am back there. The Island. She saw it float in front of the postmaster's face. The rocks were clear and the hovering, wind-swung birds; she saw them clearly in front of the wrinkles and clefts on his brow and chin. He coughed discreetly and shrugged with small deprecatory movements of the shoulders. He wished she would not stare at him as if he was a wall or invisible. If she was trying to get at his secrets she could try till crack of doom. All the same. As a precautionary measure he slid aside and faced the window.

Seems as though it will be too risky for you to go back this evening, he said; there's a bit of fog about. You'll be stopping the night in Porthbychan?

—and he wouldn't let her go on holiday in the winter: said, if she did, he'd get a concubine to keep him warm, and he meant—

A woman was talking to her friend outside the door.

You cannot possibly cross the Race alone in this weather, Mrs. Ritsin, persisted the postmaster.

I must get back to-night, Mr. Davies.

He sketched the bay with a twitching arm, as if to say: I have bound the restless wave. He became confidential, turning to stretch across the counter.

My dear Mrs. Ritsin, no woman has ever before navigated these waters. Why, even on a calm day the Porthbychan fishers will not enter the Race. Be warned, dear lady. Imagine my feelings if you were to be washed up on the beach here.

Bridget Ritsin said, I am afraid it is most important that I should get back to-night, Mr. Davies.

Ann Pritchard from the corner house slid from the glittering evening into the shadows of the post office. She spoke out of the dusk behind the door. It isn't right for a woman to ape a man, doing a man's work.

Captain Morrison is ill. He couldn't possibly come across to-day. That is why I'm in charge of the boat, Bridget answered.

Two other women had slipped in against the wall of the shop. Now, four pairs of eyes bored into her face. With sly insolence the women threw ambiguous sentences to the postmaster, who smiled as he studied the grain in the wood of his counter. Bridget picked up a bundle of letters and turned to go. The tide will be about right now, she said. Good evening, Mr. Davies. Be very, very careful, Mrs. Ritsin, and remember me to the Captain.

Laughter followed her into the street. It was like dying in agony, while crowds danced and mocked. O, my darling, my darling over the cold waves. She knew that while she was away he would try to do too much about the house. He would go to the well for water, looking over the fields he lacked strength to drain. He would be in the yard, chopping sticks. He would cough and spit blood. It isn't as if the Captain took reasonable care of himself. When he ran too hard, when he moved anything heavy and lost his breath, he only struck his chest and cursed: blast my lung. Alec dear, you should not run so fast up the mountain. He never heeded her. He had begun to spit blood.

By the bridge over the river, her friend Griff Owen was leaning against the side of a motor-car, talking to a man and woman in the front seats. He said to them, ask her, as she came past.

Excuse me, Miss, could you take us over to see the Island?

I'm sorry, she said, there's a storm coming up. It wouldn't be possible to make the double journey.

They eyed her, curious about her way of life.

Griff Owen, and the grocer's boy carrying two boxes of provisions, came down to the beach with her.

I wouldn't be you; going to be a dirty night, said the man.

The waves were chopped and the headland was vague with

hanging cloud. The two small islets in the bay were behind curtains of vapour. The sea was blurred and welcomeless. To the Island, to the Island. Here in the village, you opened a door: laughter and filthy jokes buzzed in your face. They stung and blinded. O my love, be patient, I am coming back to you, quickly, quickly, over the waves.

The grocer's boy put down the provisions on the sand near the tide edge. Immediately a shallow pool formed round the bottoms of the boxes.

Wind seems to be dropping, said Griff.

Yes, but I think there will be fog later on, she answered, sea fog. She turned to him. Oh, Griff, you are always so kind to me. What would we do without you?

He laid a hand on her shoulder. Tell me, how is the Captain feeling in himself? I don't like the thought of him being so far from the doctor.

The doctor can't do very much for him. Living in the clean air from the sea is good. These days he isn't well, soon he may be better. Don't worry, he is hanging on to life and the Island. They began to push the boat down over rollers towards the water. Last week Alec had said quite abruptly as he was stirring the boiled potatoes for the ducks: at least, you will have this land if I die.

At least, I have the Island.

Well, well, said the man, making an effort to joke; tell the Captain from me that I'll come over to see him if he comes for me himself. Tell him I wouldn't trust my life to a lady, even though the boat has got a good engine and knows her own way home.

He shook her arm: you are a stout girl.

Mr. Davies coming down, said the boy, looking over his shoulder as he heaved on the side of the boat. The postmaster came on to the beach through the narrow passage between the hotel and the churchyard. His overcoat flapped round him in the wind. He had something white in his hand. The boat floated; Bridget waded out and stowed away her provisions and parcels. By the time she had made a second journey Mr. Davies was at the water's edge.

Another letter for you, Mrs. Ritsin, he said. Very sorry, it

had got behind the old-age pension books. He peered at her, longing to know what was in the letter, dying to find out what her feelings would be when she saw the handwriting. He had already devoured the envelope with his eyes, back and front, reading the postmark and the two sentences written in pencil at the back. He knew it was a letter from Ceridwen to her husband.

A letter for the Captain, said the postmaster, and watched her closely.

Thank you. She took it, resisting the temptation to read the words that caught her eye on the back of the envelope. She put it away in the large pocket of her oilskin along with the rest.

The postmaster sucked in his cheeks and mumbled something. So Mrs. Morrison will be back here soon, he suddenly shot at her. Only the grocer's boy, whistling as he kicked the shingle, did not respond to what he said. Griff looked from her to the postmaster, she studied the postmaster's hypocritical smile. Her head went up, she was able to smile: oh, yes, of course, Mrs. Morrison is sure to come over when the weather is better. What did he know, why should he want to know?

It was like a death; every hour that she had to spend on the mainland gave her fresh wounds.

Thank you, Mr. Davies. Good-bye Griff, see you next week if the weather isn't too bad. She climbed into the motor-boat and weighed anchor. She bent over the engine and it began to live. The grocer's boy was drifting away, still kicking the beach as if he bore it a grudge. Mr. Davies called in a thin voice . . . great care . . . wish you would . . . the Race and . . .

Griff waved, and roared like a horn: tell him I'll take the next calf if it is a good one.

It was his way of wishing her God-speed. Linking the moment's hazard to the safety of future days.

She waved her hand. The men grew small, they and the gravestones of blue and green slate clustered round the medieval church at the top of the sand. The village drew into itself, fell into perspective against the distant mountains.

It was lonely in the bay. She took comfort from the steady

throbbing of the engine. She drew Ceridwen's letter from her pocket. She read: if it is *very* fine, Auntie Grace and I will come over next week-end. Arriving Saturday tea-time Porthbychan; Please meet.

Now she understood what Mr. Davies had been getting at. Ceridwen and the aunt. She shivered suddenly and felt the flesh creeping on her face and arms. The sea was bleak and washed of colour under the shadow of a long roll of mist that stretched from the level of the water almost to the sun. It was nine o'clock in the evening. She could not reach the anchorage before ten and though it was summertime, darkness would have fallen before she reached home. She hoped Alec's dog would be looking out for her on the headland.

The wind blew fresh, but the wall of mist did not seem to move at all. She wondered if Penmaen du and the mountain would be visible when she rounded the cliffs into the Race. Soon now she should be able to see the Island mountain. She knew every Islandman would sooner face a storm than fog.

So Ceridwen wanted to come over, did she? For the week-end, and with the aunt's support. Perhaps she had heard at last that another woman was looking after her sick husband that she did not want but over whom she was jealous as a tigress. The week-end was going to be merry hell. Bridget realized that she was very tired.

The mainland, the islets, the cliff-top farms of the peninsula fell away. Porpoise rolling offshore towards the Race made her heart lift for their companionship.

She took a compass-bearing before she entered the white silence of the barren wall of fog. Immediately she was both trapped and free. Trapped because it was still daylight and yet she was denied sight, as if blindness had fallen, not blindness where everything is dark, but blindness where eyes are filled with vague light and they strain helplessly. Is it that I cannot see, is this blindness? The horror was comparable to waking on a black winter night and being unable to distinguish anything, until in panic she thought, has my sight gone? And free because the mind could build images on walls of mist, her spirit could lose itself in tunnels of vapour.

The sound of the motor-boat's engine was monstrously

exaggerated by the fog. Like a giant heart it pulsed: thump, thump. There was a faint echo, as if another boat, a ghostship, moved near by. Her mind had too much freedom in these gulfs.

The motor-boat began to pitch like a bucking horse. She felt depth upon depth of water underneath the boards on which her feet were braced. It was the Race. The tide poured across her course. The brightness of cloud reared upward from the water's face. Not that it was anywhere uniform in density; high up there would suddenly be a thinning, a tearing apart of vapour with a wan high blue showing through, and once the jaundiced, weeping sun was partly visible, low in the sky, which told her that she was still on the right bearing. There were grey-blue caverns of shadow that seemed like patches of land, but they were effaced in new swirls of cloud, or came about her in imprisoning walls, tunnels along which the boat moved only to find nothingness at the end. Unconsciously, she had gritted her teeth when she ran into the fog-bank. Her tension remained. Two ghosts were beside her in the boat, Ceridwen, in a white fur coat, was sitting amidships and facing her, huddled together, cold and unhappy in the middle of the boat, her knees pressed against the casing of the engine. Alec's ghost sat in the bows. As a figurehead he leaned away from her, his face half lost in opaque cloud.

I will get back safely, I will get home, she said aloud, looking ahead to make the image of Ceridwen fade. But the phantom persisted; it answered her spoken thought.

No, you'll drown, you won't ever reach the anchorage. The dogfish will have you.

I tell you I can do it. He's waiting for me, he needs me.

Alec turned round, his face serious. When you get across the Race, if you can hear the foghorn, he said quietly, you are on the wrong tack. If you can't hear it, you're all right; it means you are cruising safely along the foot of the cliffs. . . . When you get home, will you come to me, be my little wife?

Oh, my dear, she answered, I could weep or laugh that you ask me now, here. Yes, if I get home.

Soon you'll be on the cold floor of the sea, said Ceridwen.

Spouts of angry water threatened the boat that tossed sideways. Salt sprays flew over her.

Careful, careful, warned Alec. We are nearly on Pen Cader, the rocks are near now, we are almost out of the Race.

A seabird flapped close to her face, then with a cry swerved away, its claws pressed backward.

Above the noise of the engine there was now a different sound, that of water striking land. For an instant she saw the foot of a black cliff. Wet fangs snapped at her. Vicious fangs, how near they were. Shaken by the sight, by the rock death that waited, she turned the boat away from the Island. She gasped as she saw white spouting foam against the black and slimy cliff. She was once more alone. Alec and Ceridwen, leaving her to the sea, had been sucked into the awful cloud, this vapour without substance or end. She listened for the foghorn. No sound from the lighthouse. A break in the cloud above her head drew her eyes. A few yards of the mountain-top of the Island was visible, seeming impossibly high, impossibly green and homely. Before the eddying mists rejoined she saw a thin shape trotting across the steep grass slope, far, far up near the crest of the hill. Leaning forward, she said aloud: O look, the dog. It was Alec's dog keeping watch for her. The hole in the mist closed up, the shroud fell thicker than ever. It was terrible, this loneliness, this groping that seemed as if it might go on for ever.

Then she heard the low-throated horn blaring into the fog. It came from somewhere on her right hand. So in avoiding the rocks she had put out too far to sea and had overshot the anchorage. She must be somewhere off the southern headland near the pirate's rock. She passed a line of lobster floats.

She decided to stop the engine and anchor where she was hoping that the fog would clear at nightfall. Then she would be able to return on to her proper course. There was an unnatural silence after she had cut off the engine. Water knocked against the boat.

Cold seeped into her bones from the planks. With stiff wet hands she opened the bag of provisions, taking off the crust of a loaf and spreading butter on it with her gutting knife. As she ate, she found that for the first time in weeks she had leisure in which to review her life. For when she was on the farm it was eat, work, sleep, eat, work, sleep, in rotation.

I have sinned or happiness is not for me, she thought. It was her heart's great weakness that she could not rid herself of superstitious beliefs.

Head in hands, she asked: But how have I sinned? I didn't steal another woman's husband. They had already fallen apart when I first met Alec. Is too great happiness itself a sin? Surely it's only because I am frightened of the fog that I ask, have I sinned, is this my punishment? When the sun shines I take happiness with both hands. Perhaps it's wrong to be happy when half the people of the world are chain-bound and hungry, cut off from the sun. If you scratch below the surface of most men's minds you find that they are bleeding inwardly. Men want to destroy themselves. It is their only hope. Each one secretly nurses the death-wish, to be god and mortal in one; not to die at nature's order, but to cease on his own chosen day. Man has destroyed so much that only the destruction of all life will satisfy him.

How can it be important whether I am happy or unhappy? And yet it's difficult for me to say, I am only one, what does my fate matter? For I want to be fulfilled like other women. What have I done to be lost in winding sheets of fog?

And he will be standing in the door wondering that I do not come.

For how long had she sat in the gently-rocking boat? It was almost dark and her eyes smarted from constant gazing. Mist weighed against her eyeballs. She closed her eyes for relief.

Something was staring at her. Through drawn lids she felt the steady glance of a sea-creature. She looked at the darkening waves. Over an area of a few yards she could see; beyond, the wave was cloud, the cloud was water. A dark, wet-gleaming thing on the right. It disappeared before she could make out what it was. And then, those brown beseeching eyes of the seal cow. She had risen near by, her mottled head scarcely causing a ripple. Lying on her back in the grey-green gloom of the sea she waved her flippers now outwards to the woman, now inwards to her white breast, saying, come to me, come to me, to the caverns where shark bones lie like tree stumps, bleached, growth-ringed like trees.

Mother seal, seal cow. The woman stretched out her arms.

The attraction of those eyes was almost strong enough to draw her to salt death. The head disappeared. The dappled back turned over in the opaque water, and dived. Bridget gripped the side of the boat, praying that this gentle visitant should not desert her.

Hola, hola, hola, seal mother from the eastern cave.

Come to me, come to me, come to me. The stone-grey head reappeared on the other side, on her left. Water ran off the whiskered face, she showed her profile; straight nose, and above, heavy lids drooping over melancholy eyes. When she plunged showing off her prowess, a sheen of pearly colours ran over the sleek body.

They watched one another until the light failed to penetrate the fog. After the uneasy summer twilight had fallen, the woman was still aware of the presence of the seal. She dozed off into a shivering sleep through which she heard faintly the snorting of the sea creature. A cold, desolate sound. Behind that again was the bull-throated horn bellowing into the night.

She dreamt: Alec was taking her up the mountain at night under a sky dripping with blood. Heaven was on fire. Alec was gasping for breath. The other islanders came behind, their long shadows stretching down the slope. The mountain top remained far off. She never reached it.

Out of dream, she swam to consciousness, painfully leaving the dark figures of fantasy. A sensation of swimming upward through fathoms of water. The sea of her dreams was dark and at certain levels between sleeping and waking a band of light ran across the waves. Exhaustion made her long to fall back to the sea-floor of oblivion, but the pricking brain floated her at last on to the surface of morning.

She awoke with a great wrenching gasp that flung her against the gunwale. Wind walked the sea. The fog had gone, leaving the world raw and disenchanted in the false dawn. Already, gulls were crying for a new day. Wet and numb with cold, the woman looked about her. At first it was impossible to tell off what shore the boat was lying. For a few minutes it was enough to know that she was after all at anchor so close to land.

Passing down the whole eastern coastline, she had rounded the south end and was a little way past Mall's bay on the west. The farmhouse, home, seemed near across the fore-shortened fields. Faint light showed in the kitchen window, a warm glow in the grey landscape. It was too early for the other places, Goppa, Pen Isaf, to show signs of life. Field, farm, mountain, sea, and sky. What a simple world. And below, the undercurrents.

Mechanically she started up the engine and raced round to the anchorage through mounting sea spray and needles of rain.

She made the boat secure against rising wind, then trudged through seaweed and shingle, carrying the supplies up into the boathouse. She loitered inside after putting down the bags of food. Being at last out of the wind, no longer pitched and tumbled on the sea, made her feel that she was in a vacuum. Wind howled and thumped at the walls. Tears of salt water raced down the body of a horse scratched long ago on the window by Alec. Sails stacked under the roof shivered in the draught forced under the slates. She felt that she was spinning wildly in some mad dance. The floor rose and fell as the waves had done. The earth seemed to slide away and come up again under her feet. She leant on the windowsill, her forehead pressed to the pane. Through a crack in the glass wind poured in a cold stream across her cheek. Nausea rose in her against returning to the shore for the last packages. After that there would be almost the length of the Island to walk. At the thought she straightened herself, rubbing the patch of skin on her forehead where pressure on the window had numbed it. She fought her way down to the anchorage. Spume blew across the rocks, covering her sea boots. A piece of wrack was blown into the wet tangle of her hair. Picking up the bag of provisions, she began the return journey. Presently she stopped, put down the bag, and went again to the waves. She had been so long with them that now the thought of going inland was unnerving. Wading out until water swirled round her knees she stood relaxed, bending like a young tree under the wind's weight. Salt was crusted on her lips and hair. Her feet were sucked by outdrawn shingle. She no longer wished to struggle but to let a wave carry her beyond the world.

I want sleep, she said to the sea. O God, I am so tired, so tired. The sea sobbed sleep, the wind mourned, sleep.

Oystercatchers flying in formation, a pattern of black and white and scarlet, screamed: we are St. Bride's birds, we saved Christ, we rescued the Saviour.

A fox-coloured animal was coming over the weedy rocks of the point. It was the dog, shivering and mist-soaked as if he had been out all night. He must have been lying in a cranny and so missed greeting her when she had landed. He fawned about her feet, barking unhappily.

They went home together, passing Pen Isaf that slept: Goppa too. It was about four o'clock of a summer daybreak. She picked two mushrooms glowing in their own radiance. Memories came of her first morning's walk on the Island. There had been a green and lashing sea and gullies of damp rock, and parsley fern among loose stones. Innocent beginning, uncomplicated, shadowless. As if looking on the dead from the pinnacle of experience, she saw herself as she had been.

She opened the house door: a chair scraped inside. Alec stood in the kitchen white with strain and illness.

So you did come, he said dully.

Yes, she said with equal flatness, putting down the bags.

How sick, how deathly he looked.

Really, you shouldn't have sat up all night for me. He stirred the pale ashes; a fine white dust rose.

Look, there's still fire, and the kettle's hot. He coughed. They drank the tea in silence, standing far apart. Her eyes never left his face. And the sea lurched giddily under her braced feet. Alec went and sat before the hearth. Bridget came up behind his chair and pressed her cheek to his head. She let her arms fall slackly round his neck. Her hands hung over his chest. Tears grew in her eyes, brimming the lower lids so that she could not see. They splashed on to his clenched fists. He shuddered a little. Without turning his head, he said: Your hair's wet. You must be so tired.

Yes, she said, so tired. Almost worn out.

Come, let us go to bed for an hour or two.

You go up, she answered, moving away into the back kitchen; I must take off my wet clothes first.

Don't be long. Promise me you won't be long. He got up out of the wicker chair, feeling stiff and old, to be near her where she leant against the slate table. One of her hands was on the slate, the other was peeling off her oilskin trousers.

He said: don't cry. I can't bear it if you cry.

I'm not, I'm not. Go to bed please.

I thought you would never get back.

She took the bundle of letters out of the inner pocket of her coat and put them on the table. She said: there's one for you from Ceridwen.

Never mind about the letters. Come quickly to me. She stood naked in the light that spread unwillingly from sea and sky. Little channels of moisture ran down her flanks, water dripped from her hair over the points of her breasts. As she reached for a towel he watched the skin stretch over the fragile ribs. He touched her thigh with his fingers, almost a despairing gesture. She looked at him shyly, and swiftly bending, began to dry her feet. Shaking as if from ague, she thought her heart's beating would be audible to him.

He walked abruptly away from her, went upstairs. The boards creaked in his bedroom.

Standing in the middle of the floor surrounded by wet clothes, she saw through the window how colour was slowly draining back into the world. It came from the sea, into the wild irises near the well, into the withy beds in the corner of the field. Turning, she went upstairs in the brightness of her body.

He must have fallen asleep so soon as he lay down. His face was bleached, the bones too clearly visible under the flesh. Dark folds of skin lay loosely under his eyes. Now that the eyes were hidden, his face was like a death-mask. She crept quietly into bed beside him.

Through the open window came the lowing of cattle. The cows belonging to Goppa were being driven up for milking. Turning towards the sleeping man, she put her left hand on his hip. He did not stir.

She cried then as if she would never be able to stop, the tears gushing down from her eyes until the pillow was wet and stained from her weeping.

What will become of us, what will become of us?

CABBALA

by E. HERISSON

Sandalwood, cedarwood, beryl, and chalcedon:
the candlestick glows in the innermost Temple
and trumpets are sounding to welcome
the Lion of Judah;
beryl and chalcedon: this is the Law.

Sandalwood, cedarwood, Lilith and Samael:
the Temple veil rent and the golden bowl broken,
the scrolls and the trumpets are carried to Rome
(but Rome is no longer),
O Lilith and Samael! Thus the dispersion.

Sandalwood, cedarwood: Tetragrammaton.
The Sons of the Doctrine have met long in secret
to speak of the Name which may not be spoken,
Sephiroth, Shekinah,
Tetragrammaton: this the foundation.

Sandalwood, cedarwood: Elohim, Adonai!
Scholars of Spain and scholars of Italy
hold fast to their souls through torture and burning
(Midrash, Zohar).
Elohim, Adonai! Whence comes the Kingdom?

Sandalwood, Samael, cedarwood, Lilith.
The Sons of the Doctrine have lost the full secret:
Israel's courts and the courts of the Gentile
are heavy with mourning.
Cedarwood? Lilith. We behold desolation.

Lilith and Samael? TETRAGRAMMATON.
Let us remember the Law and the Doctrine,
return to Shekinah, achieve the Beginning,
find there our Messiah.
Tetragrammaton: Elohim, Adonai!

THE TRIO

Introduction to an Unwritten Novel

JOHANNES V. JENSEN

PERCHED dizzily on a high bicycle Peter Prestmark was bowling along the main road between the town of Nibe, in Jutland, and a destination which he had not yet decided on.

It was in the days of those tall bicycles still remembered by elderly people—some keep a memento of them to this day in the shape of a scar or two—before the arrival of the ‘safety’, as it was called, had made progress easier. There was nothing particularly suggestive of safety about the older type of machine: you were suspended in mid-air, and if you wanted to stay there you had to keep going all the time, straight ahead, in order to avoid the fatal attraction of the ditch and a fall as from a toppling step-ladder. You had to stick to the pedals for dear life, bolting with the machine and being bolted with yourself. To get up or off was a dangerous enterprise, but once in the saddle one abandoned oneself to fate and the road as long as one’s luck lasted.

This was what Peter Prestmark was doing. He was up and going full speed, working like a horse. It was his first long ride, and he was still a little shaky: he kept the machine steady in a sort of blissful hypnosis, perched on the saddle six feet above the ground, sweating and devouring miles of the dusty high-road that deployed before him like a white tape. An unfamiliar landscape swung before his eyes in sweeping curves. The sun and the perspiration trickling into his eyes had made him a little dazed: he had become oblivious of time, a solitary soul lost in space; to come down again would involve some danger to life and limb, but there was no hurry about that: he was on a holiday, and it did not matter where he was or where the machine took him. Did young Icarus bother where he was

going when he tried his wings, or want to do anything except to soar?

He had tried falling off; he was already a veteran as far as that was concerned. Hot and still a little sore in various parts of his anatomy, Peter Prestmark felt a secret glow of satisfaction, as if he were listening to a private storm of applause at having passed the test. Of course he had fallen off, but his neck and limbs had come through the trial unbroken. It had happened, as they had told him it would, as he was going downhill. A stone had been the cause—he had been warned against that: the wheel ran over it, and of course he went over with the machine, pitching forward with the beastly thing on top of him. It was a hard road full of broken stones and they all went right into him. The skin came off the palms of his hands, and the bruises got rubbed full of sand; his nose was scratched and still smarting, his breeches torn across one knee; they were not his own breeches. The world was purple, gyrating like a merry-go-round as he got up; he had to sit down again, and it was not till he had had a drop of brandy from his pocket flask that the world resumed its normal colour and stability. Ye Gods! suppose the flask had been broken. But that was why it had got a wicker thing round it, to prevent that happening. Good job everything in the kit-bag was safe. The pistol, a heavy muzzle-loader, was all right; it had not even gone off; the cigar-case was unhurt, not one cigar broken—marvellous! But the machine! the beastly thing had behaved in a vicious manner, perfectly murderous. Now it was lying on one side as if dead, one pedal in the air, but when it went over it had tried to murder him from behind, digging one hard pedal into the small of his back, kicking him with the handle-bars, and even lifting its tail, the long curved steel tube that kept the back wheel in position, and hitting him a blow on the back of his head that made it sing. It was shamming now, of course, but he would show it who was master. Peter Prestmark got the machine into an upright position, gave it a savage shake, lifted it with an effort, and banged the wheels into the road again, raced it a score of paces, and vaulted into the saddle. It was too high, and he had to jump a foot in order to get there, like a stork

landing on its nest, but he got up all right. He wobbled and zig-zagged a little, but he got his feet on the pedals at last and got the thing under control, and now they were working one another up again, devouring mile after mile of the road. That was the initiation; he had a bump on his head, but he had become a wiser man: he rode more carefully, but also at a more furious pace for the rest of the day.

The farmers shook their heads to see him pass. Gadding about! A rider on an iron horse in a lonely elevation above the highroad, bent over the handle-bars in a suffering attitude, the legs working so fast you could hardly see them, a man working himself to death, but refusing to get off till he was stiff—a race probably, those crazy people from the towns! Most likely he was only the first of a whole bunch of competitors, leading miles in front of the next man. A grimy nose he had got, to be sure, been mucking about on the ground evidently. A slight, starved-looking chap, but reckless. Shameless, that was what those townspeople were! Immovable in its field the placid cow stopped chewing, its mouth full of grass, to stare with pious eyes across the ditch at this dust-raising, glittering miracle that came and vanished in the summer air. Up rose the gabled church tower from behind a hill, dwindling behind again with its black window like a disapproving eye: a reckless, restless generation, these young men!

But the younger and more enlightened villagers looked at the hurrying figure with respect—as likely as not he might be one of the national heroes from Copenhagen, who had crossed the Belts and was now dashing through Jutland in an insatiable craving for a few quiet, out-of-the-way miles far from the applauding multitudes of the capitals. Such, it appeared to Peter Prestmark, might quite conceivably be their thoughts. It was even possible that some persons of quality and a knowledge of the world—such as, for instance, some young ladies in a gig, whom he had passed, and one of whom had hurriedly jumped out in order to hold the head of the silly horse—that they might take him for an Englishman, the very embodiment of eccentric energy, out to break the world's record. Haggard, and with ill-concealed groans of exhaustion, he stamped past them: surely they must see that he had to be at

Esbjerg before dark in order to catch the boat to England. What a glimpse of the great world for those people in the gig! Yes, this was indeed a great day for Peter Prestmark!

Somewhat later in the morning the known world became completely lost to young Peter Prestmark. The last lingering idea of his whereabouts vanished; the country had changed completely: vast naked moors on both sides of the road, sometimes not a single house to be seen. The road itself was grassy; even the cart tracks had become mere depressions in the green: it was a country almost without a trace of habitation, only melancholy barrows outlined against the wide empty horizon. At length a strip of blue water appeared in the distance to the left, a little later on the right hand, too, and behind it an unfamiliar coast-line. A peninsula, evidently, a cul-de-sac where all roads ended. Where on earth was he?—the sea? Geographical reminiscences summoned up for the occasion failed to solve the problem; but one thing was certain: he had got to where the land ended. Wonderful, the distance that thing would carry you!

He would have to ask his way, though it was rather a bother getting off. The road turned to the left, dipping towards the shore, an open bay with scattered cottages and boats on the beach, evidently a fishing hamlet. Close to the road there was a small bare church, standing by itself on a hillock. There must be a view from there anyway; and Peter Prestmark slowed down, jumped off acrobatically, and got on to the road all right; but he could not hold the machine: he went over, this time on top of it, one pedal kicking him in the stomach, his knees wedged between the spokes, the arms entangled in them too—beastly sharp things they were. One handle-bar hit him a blow on the cheek. He waded out of the wheel on all fours, not without stepping on the machine a little, but it hit back and took no harm. It was a tussle between two hard-bitten antagonists. When one is alone one does not groan or swear, one smarts in indignant silence. Mute and wrathful, Peter Prestmark flung his machine against the grassy slope and climbed up the hill in order to find his bearings.

On the flat hill-top there was a small churchyard, quite bare, without a single tree. Surrounded by the humble tombs stood

the church, an old, old greystone building without a tower, but with a wooden erection at the western gable in which the bell hung. But when Peter Prestmark came round the corner he forgot what he was looking for, forgot everything, in fact, for what he saw there: two young girls were sitting on one of the grassy tombs, both very surprised to see him.

General shyness, a sort of visionary stupefaction as always when young people are suddenly confronted with one another. An insurmountable barrier seems to part them, and yet they manage to break through it somehow. One simply has to, and one succeeds in a dazed way, clumsily and awkwardly, a sort of upward stumble; and afterwards when one is happily launched on a conversation one laughs copiously and at nothing, relieved and still a little dizzy from having passed a bridge which never existed. Young people are like that: the real obstacle, that one does not know one another at all, matters nothing; soon one has a thousand things to tell one another.

The two girls remained seated on the tomb where they had been making wreaths of the flower called thrift, a thin flower with a pink head, which grows in churchyards and sandy fields near the sea. They are very good for making wreaths—you can bind them with their own stalks—and those which the girls were engaged on were very pretty. They were sisters, and their names were Cecily and Gerda.

The elder was a big strapping girl, almost stout, but her complexion was still that of a child, very white with an additional effect of clearness, because her hair was black and she had dark eyes. They both had that: rather narrow eyes, almond shaped and very clear, as if they were looking on the world for the first time. Cecily's were the sweetest; they seemed to smile of their own accord with a fairy-like tenderness, the sweeter the more she narrowed them. Gerda's were darker, and seemed to shine with a more secret glow. She smiled with one side of her mouth only and put on more grown-up manners, though she was really the younger. They both had lovely hair, dark brown and thick, Gerda's in a coil like a rope down her back and Cecily's arranged in a heavy knot at the back of her head; it was parted in the middle and so thick that it lay in a massive roll at each side of her head. But her head was small

and her neck rather short. The two girls were dressed alike, in greyish homespun gowns that still smelt of the sewing machine. That was why they had gone for a walk, because it was the first time they had them on, Cecily confessed ingenuously, reproved by a glance from Gerda.

After Mr. Prestmark's identity had been thoroughly exploited as a subject of conversation; after all shyness had evaporated and much silvery laughter been lavished on Mr. Prestmark's strange costume, a laughter fortunately tempered by an unmistakable feminine admiration—no wonder, for he was indeed something out of the common, in Jersey breeches and long stockings, rather like an acrobat, or a frog (the splendour borrowed from a friend), marked by the honourable scars of great athletic feats, a man from distant parts, a stranger altogether and an outlandish and impressive bird of passage—and after the wreaths had been finished and placed on the girls' heads an impromptu trio arranged itself in the churchyard. If anybody had passed on the road they would have heard the sound of part-songs from the hill, a whole angelic choir, though the church was empty.

At first Cecily began to sing; singing was her whole being; and as, among other things, she sang a song which Prestmark did not know, he had to learn it. Patiently they sang it right through several times, both Cecily and Gerda, correcting him and lingering on the notes when he went wrong, leaning towards him with open mouths as if trying to breathe the tune into his very soul. At last, when he had learnt it, they asked him to sing, and when he was well started Cecily looked him steadily in the eyes and joined in, but in the bass—she could pitch her voice as low as that. He faltered, but she looked at him firmly and he managed to keep on and to sing through; and when the two voices had got in tune with each other Gerda fell in whistling, pursing her lips with a grave look in her wide open eyes. She whistled like a man: with big, rounded notes. Both sisters were musical, all music and sensitiveness. Already in the second verse the trio swelled and overcame them with an emotion past words: each of them seemed to sing in a rapt solitude, so close to each other sitting on the same tomb, and yet separated by worlds. But their very beings

seemed to rise on the summer air like one single note:

I de grønne Skove
 hørte jeg en Sang.
 I de grønne Skove
 hørte jeg en Sang,
 Som om fjernt en Pige
 kaldte i sit Rige—
 Ak, Vidunderlige,
 Syng endnu en Gang. . . .

Alle grønne Skove
 er saa stille nu.
 Alle grønne Skove
 er saa stille nu.
 Ak, en Pigestemme,
 som jeg hørte hjemme,
 kan jeg aldrig glemme.
 Ak, hvor findes du?

And when they had finished they looked wanly at one another for a moment, intoxicated with something which they did not understand, smiling and retiring, as it were, each into a secret chamber of her own.

Afterwards they tried a number of others songs, too; but at last Cecily got up in order to perform a solo. The other two remained sitting on the tomb as in a box in a theatre, while she stepped backwards towards the church and stopped there with the gable and the time-worn frame in which the bell hung for a background. Clutching the front of her gown with nervous fingers she collected her thoughts, her mouth passionate. 'I haven't got a piano, you know,' she said to herself. Then she threw out her chest, shook her head, and began to sing, her short neck stretched, her throat swelling. She sang in a very high key, completely in tune, but with a great effort:

Morgenrot,
 Morgenrot,
 Leuchtest mir zum frühen Tod?
 Bald wird die Trompete blasen.

TRIO

Dann muss ich mein Leben lassen,
Ich und mancher Kamerad!

She made a pause, turning with a professional gesture to the other half of an imaginary audience, drew a deep breath, and sang, straining her strong girlish voice to the utmost, dizzily high and piercing notes like throbbing cries:

Kaum gedacht,
Kaum gedacht,
War der Lust ein End' gemacht.
Gestern noch auf stolzen Rossen
Heute durch die Brust geschossen
Morgen in das kühle Grab!

Ach wie bald,
Ach wie bald,
Schwindet Schönheit und Gestalt!
Thust du stolz mit deinen Wangen,
Die mit Milch und Purpur prangen?
Ach! Die Rosen welken all'!

Hot and trembling she stopped, and the summer day became quite hushed after the passionate notes.

It is a difficult tune, she said, coming back, and sitting down on the tomb with the others; and they were silent together a little while. Their eyes grew wistful. Chewing blades of grass they gazed pensively at the distance, where the sunlight glittered on the water with a serene, blinding light, and the gulls screamed to one another over the open, faintly echoing bay. It was such a quiet day, sunny, a weekday—you could hear it from the cries of the gulls, somehow—but very peaceful and unhurried on this humble coast. Below the hill stood an old farm; they could look straight into the courtyard framed by the four low wings of the building, and down the chimney, from which the smoke rose in a widening column. The sun was high in the sky; it was almost noon. Below in the courtyard fowls were strutting about; a tethered sheep was jingling its chain; far away from the beach came the rumbling sound of tackle being thrown into a boat, but otherwise the only sound was the cries of the gulls: the monologue of the flat, sunny beach; and the sun stood silent with its high summer fire above

their heads. Like some grey old creature stood the church, infinitely benevolent, a stunted greystone being overtaken by the daylight, but blind: time itself! And the ancient, time-worn belfry straddled dutifully with its burden under the shadow of the hood. From boyish habit Peter threw a piece of brick at the bell, and it whimpered, a long-drawn frail moan, as if time's wounds had been touched and bled a little in its sleep. Gerda and Cecily looked at him imploringly: please don't. Some fleeting grief had passed through the sunlight like a breath. They sat looking at the tombs with the scattered, leaning crosses and the faded glass wreaths, and the song came back to Cecily; quite softly she crooned to herself like a breeze passing over the grasses:

Ach, wie ba-ald,
Ach, wie ba-ald . . .

That day none of them forgot.

But as they got up after these few hours of a summer morning which, though they did not know it, had had the force of eternity, Gerda rose for the first time from where she had been sitting with her legs tucked under her in the grass, hesitatingly and with a defenceless glance, and Prestmark saw then—though he successfully pretended not to see—that she had short skirts: she was still a schoolgirl, but she had all the time stolen the little advantage that he believed her to be grown-up too.

Ah, yes, that was the finest, most intangible essence of the day: a party of young people, grown-up for the first time, their first day as grown-ups; without knowing they had given each other the most coveted gift. For they did not know each other; where they came from they were looked upon as children; they themselves reacted to their surroundings as children, how could it be otherwise? But to-day they had played at entertaining company in real life; they had given each other real parts to play and had become men and women. One is eternally grateful to those who have been the cause of a thing like that. As a big boy Peter Prestmark had dropped into this place, which for the rest of his life he never ceased to love; as Mr. Prestmark he took leave of the two ladies with a display

of much grave deportment, as gravely received. No power on earth could have made him look at one of them below the waist, for young people know what hurts.

The ladies went down to the road with him in order to see him take his departure, and were overwhelmed with genuine awe at the sight of the perilous vehicle which he dragged out and prepared to mount before their eyes, nervously, but with an air of doggedness. The machine was like a sun, glittering and nickle-plated, with a funny little satellite behind the big wheel. The ladies were impressed, and displayed a becoming ignorance, flattering to Prestmark's pride. An ingenuous exclamation to the effect that such a machine must cost an awful lot of money they were unable to keep back. Yes, of course, Peter Prestmark observed casually, evidently uninterested in prices and costs (that he had borrowed both the machine and the outfit from a generous friend for a day's outing was a circumstance which he saw no reason to touch on here). Abashed the two ladies dropped the subject, perceiving that they had behaved in an unladylike way, and to change the topic: how far, now, was Mr. Prestmark going to-day? Peter Prestmark was testing nuts with a spanner: back to Nibe, he supposed.

Cecily } *Nibe!*
Gerda }

Remoteness itself! The edge of the world! Scores and scores of miles! Even with a carriage and horses they had never been half so far.

Peter Prestmark girded up his loins for the fray, oiled the machine with a funny little can, muttering something to the effect that the bearings ought to be cleaned out with kerosene by rights, slapped the saddle hard in order to see if the machine was properly balanced, and made the pedals spin; one of them showed some reluctance to go round, he knew why. Stooping over the task he jerked out bits of information about the insignificance of distance nowadays, as compared with more primitive times, now that one had wheels of this diameter, not to mention the ball bearings and the reduced friction: the girls were lost in wonder.

Then, when the gladiator had wiped the oil off his person and shaken hands, a little pale and feverish, and when Cecily and Gerda had stepped back to the edge of the ditch, waving handkerchiefs like grown-up ladies, but with ingenuous child-like features, Peter started the machine, running beside it. A succession of small dust clouds rose from under the foot with which he pushed off; the other foot was on the perch and his arms up in the air, clutching what he could reach of the handle-bars. He straightened his back; now he had only to jump one foot to get into the saddle, and he did land on the narrow shelf very elegantly, too elegantly, in fact, and with too much momentum, for he pitched forward with the machine, knocking his head against the road surface. And now the machine seemed to gore him like a bull with the handle-bars, lashing out with the hind wheel. The big wheel placed itself on top of the rider in the dust like a lid, kicking him hard with one pedal, and the long connecting rod swung round and hit him in the back of his head as if trying to keep him down.

Cecily } Oh!
Gerda }

But Peter Prestmark was up again at once, picked up the machine, twisted the handle-bars into shape, banged the wheels into the road, making the machine rebound like a prancing steed. Sneezing and spitting dust, shouting distortedly back to the audience to the effect, as far as they could make out, that it *would* do that now and again, he started the machine once more, and this time he landed duly in the saddle, zigzagged a little, dangerously attracted by the ditches till he got his feet on the pedals. But now he was under way and shouted good-bye without, of course, being able to turn his head in his precarious position. A few moments later the wondering girls saw him turn a bend of the road in a cloud of dust with a flight like that of some long-legged bird, a stork or a crane. For them the great adventure vanished like a sheaf of sunbeams down the road; to him it was left at the roadside, gazing after him.

And what then? Was that their one and only encounter?

Did the trio ever meet again? And Peter Prestmark, what became of him? Did he become a celebrated athlete, or perhaps a bicycle manufacturer and captain of industry, who made his fortune in America and founded a whole manufacturing town there? And did he then unexpectedly meet Cecily, who had become a famous singer, the idol of the great opera houses, and did fate put mountains of obstacles in their way, diabolical machinations? Or had they both of them got married in the meantime, she to a scoundrel and he to a slut, the tragedy ready to hand; or had they waited faithfully for one another for years till they had grown old and faded? Or did things go with a rush so that they got married and lived a cat-and-dog life ever after? Or did they become happy, and was Gerda wasted by a secret grief, refusing one suitor after another, though she was brimming over with youth and had eyes like stars, and did she become a lovely, silver-haired aunt, and a nun, and the only survivor when all the other characters were in their graves?

I cannot say. It remains unknown as the novel, as told above, was never written. This is only the introduction; there is only this same chapter, so promising, so full of beginnings. The only thing to do is to read it all over again, for the story ends here.

The fate of the tall machine, on the other hand, is well known. It is common knowledge that it was scrapped; it is an extinct species. Stowed away and forgotten in some lumber room you may still come across a specimen, ungainly and rusty, the narrow massive rubber tyre of the monstrous wheel slashed by the roads, the whole thing marked by the scars of many breakdowns, an old ludicrous ghost from a forgotten time more remote from our own than many a much more distant epoch, one of the exhibits of the frightful museum of the 'eighties.

The old greystone church is still there unchanged, and the gulls still hold their old noisy meetings on the blue echoing bay in the long summer days; it might still be the same moment as when the three young people joined their voices in a chorus that moved themselves past understanding.

Even the old blackened belfry is there still under the chequered gable, the background against which Cecily had her first appearance, wreathed like a child, to an audience of two other children, and crosses and tombs for the rest. How young she was, how ardent, brimming over with song, eager to burst into flower! How her breast strained—against what?

And the song that welled from her big fresh mouth as from a fountain, that was the old wild and rapt song of the medieval troopers, sung on the way to battle, the pæan of green souls midway between life and death; and one seems to see a wave of young riders rising and falling, and behind that another wave that has its own rise and fall, and thus it echoes in the song, a gay and lovely rhythm about the riders and their expectancy—

Morgenrot,
Morgenrot . . .

(Translated by C. A. Bodelsen)

CORRESPONDENCE

15 ARNOS GROVE COURT,
LONDON, N.W. 11.

DEAR SIR,

I am preparing for publication a book called *The Man You Love To Hate*, a biography of Erich von Stroheim, now acting in French films. I should be grateful if you would publish this letter in order that any of your readers who possess cuttings, articles, or photographs of Stroheim, or of films directed and written by Stroheim, might lend me their material for use in my book. And such material will be acknowledged and returned immediately.

Although there have been books on Stroheim published in French and also in Italian, there has been, up to now, no published appreciation in English of the work and influence of one of the most remarkable personalities in the history of the cinema.

Yours faithfully,

PETER NOBLE (*signed*).

SCENERY AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR PLOT

HUGH BRADENHAM

PERHAPS it is no good complaining when a novelist tries to make background and setting a substitute for character and plot. To look through the brightly lit window and see people as if they and their furniture were equally curious, revealing, or inexplicable, is so much the habit of the modern novelist, and as an art has been brought to such a point of expertise, that it must often be accepted as the essential aim of his work.

In *The Slaves of Solitude* (Constable, 9s. 6d.), Mr. Patrick Hamilton observes with a really disquieting relish the frightful interior—which seems all the more brilliantly lit because of the blackout outside in the streets of a town near London—of a boarding-house where the useless and the homeless have taken refuge during the war.

About the dining-room (he begins) there was something peculiarly and gratuitously hellish. For this quite small room, with its bow window jutting out on to the street, had once been the famous Tea Room itself!—the room into which, long ago, the seeker after tea in the street had hastily glimpsed, or perhaps rudely stared, rapidly absorbing through his pores the quality of the cakes, the class and quantity of the customers, the size of the room, the cleanliness of the cloths, and the comfort of the chairs, before making his decision to enter or go elsewhere! . . . There was the same slippery oilcloth of parquet pattern: there were the same tables covered with red chequered cloth: the same cheap black wooden chairs with rush seats: the same red chequered curtains . . . the same passe partouted etchings of country cottages on the wall . . . The red chequered tables were, of course, fewer in number than in those days, and what remained were huddled in relation to the gas-fire in the middle of the wall opposite the window. The room was lit by two electric bulbs hanging from the ceiling . . .

The trouble Mr. Hamilton had taken with his setting—the equivalent in words of the mean furnishings and dismal light-

ing on which he could have called in a play—leads one to expect that the action will be worthy of it. On this stage something of unusual interest is surely about to happen. What does happen is the tyranny of a sadist, a character exceptionally well-drawn, over his fellow boarders. He embodies, in this backwater, the same spirit of aggression at loose in a world at war, and so far as he goes he is fascinating. With Irving to act him on the stage (if Irving had cared for him) he might have carried the play. But in the novel his power is rather a factor in the author's scheme than a reality to the reader. Mr. Hamilton's other characters are all subordinate and cannot themselves provide a sufficient alternative drama, and the book falls back on the accessories of description and a tension which, because of the ultimate weakness of the plot, collapses and leaves the reader with nothing to share except the anguished discontent of those doomed to survive in the gruesome setting of the author's well-imagined boarding-house.

Miss Lettice Cooper, too, recognizes the dramatic value of scenery, but she uses it much more economically. To her, scenery may have a useful if rather obvious symbolism: the bombed site, for instance, is evidently richly suggestive. Her use of it in *Black Bethlehem* (Gollancz, 9s. 6d.) is, however, a little forced. She herself, perhaps, is aware of this, for she tries to give her three studies—of a man, a woman, and a child—a unity with prefatory quotations from Yeats and Mr. Auden, and with a prologue and an epilogue. Her subjects are presented at a moment of spiritual crisis. The young soldier, like so many, finds peacetime problems much less easy to resolve on the spot than they had seemed in the far away quiet of the African desert (Mr. Priestley's men in new suits found this, too). The woman is concerned with recovering her own self-esteem after her lover's infidelity—a subject not fundamentally restricted to the time of war. The child is jealous of the new baby, and this study, again not one peculiar to the war, has a depth and feeling which its companions lack. Miss Cooper is clearly well-equipped to look at character and write about it, but she is inclined to dissipate her strength in unnecessary eloquence.

Mr. Moray McLaren in *Escape and Return* (Chapman and

Hall, 8s. 6d.) evades his duties as a story-teller not by dwelling on plot and character, or on scenery, but by losing himself in doctrinaire argument. His situation has possibilities. In reaction against his wife's adultery with his young friend (of which he would never have known had it not been for her unkindly confession) Mr. McLaren's protagonist throws himself into satanism, and a great part of the book is devoted to discussion of this. Confused as this discussion is, with a detailed report on the satanist's physical degeneration, it compensates less than ever for the neglect of pure story. The loss is all the more regrettable from Mr. McLaren's evident ability to write.

Like Mr. Patrick Hamilton, Mr. Cledwyn Hughes has a good eye for a theatrical situation, and in *The Inn Closes for Christmas* (Pilot Press, 9s. 6d.), he describes with what would seem to be all the paraphernalia of the stage the married life of a woman whose reliance on her artificial leg becomes so macabre an obsession—catalogues of surgical appliances are her favourite reading—that in the end her husband murders her. Inevitably there are moments when Mr. Hughes is more concerned to show the psychological effect of such an obsession, but his insight into character is slightly superficial, and because of this the physical facts make a greater impact. Certainly, the author is at his best when he is describing the actual murder. In *The Different Drummer*, another story in the same volume, he appears to believe that though environment may not determine a man's character, it does at least determine his fate. Here his characters plainly belong to a world in which hardships are accepted almost as a matter of course, and the struggles of a young Welshman and his wife have the authenticity of first hand observation. In the compass of these two stories, Mr. Hughes is clearly a writer with a gift for natural and effective dialogue. He is, too, an imaginative observer as well as a careful recorder of the contradictions of the human heart.

Background in such minute detail as is the custom now makes some books readable that would otherwise be dull, but it has made more difficult the problems of the serious novelist. Mr. L. P. Hartley, in *Eustace and Hilda* (Putnam, 10s. 6d.), has pulled it off in spite of this. His Venice between the wars has

nothing in common with the guide book. What is observed is observed with the eye of an artist and his keen appreciation, and it makes an excellent setting for the third act of Mr. Hartley's drama of spiritual domination. In this book, Hilda and Eustace are physically apart until the end, but in letters and dreams the author maintains the relationship. In Venice the boy is the guest of Lady Nelly, to be set adrift in the shallows of the fashionable world, and to be innocently captivated by the second-rate. In his own mind their wit and elegance do exist. But the bond with England is not to be forgotten, much less broken. Hilda's unhappy love he blames on himself, and the climax of the book is his attempt to redress the wrong with his own life. How delicately and beautifully the tragedy is handled may be gauged by the closing paragraphs. "She must have gone home," he thought, and at once he knew that it was very late and the air was darkening round him. So he set off towards the cliffs, which now seemed extraordinarily high and dangerous, too high to climb, too dangerous to approach. He stopped and called "Hilda!"—and this time he thought she answered him in the cry of a sea-mew, and he followed in the direction of the cry. "Where are you?" he called, and the answer came back, "Here!" But when he looked he only saw a sea-weed-coated rock standing in a pool. But he recognized the rock, and knew what he should find there.

'The white plumose anemone was stroking the water with its feelers.

'The same anemone as before, without a doubt, but there was no shrimp in its mouth. "It will die of hunger," thought Eustace. "I must find it something to eat," and he bent down and scanned the pool. Shrimps were disporting themselves in the shallows; but they slipped out of his cupped hands, and fled away into the dark recesses under the eaves of the rock, where the crabs lurked. Then he knew what he must do. Taking off his shoes and socks, he waded into the water. The water was bitterly cold; but colder still were the lips of the anemone as they closed around his finger. "I shall wake up now," thought Eustace, who had awakened from many dreams.

'But the cold crept onwards and he did not wake.'

SUMMER SEASON AT THE ACADEMY CINEMA

ROBERT HERRING

THE Academy Cinema in Oxford Street has followed a Danish film with an Italian, a Swedish, and, as I write, a new French film. The Italian was *The Barber of Seville*, sung and acted incompletely before camera and microphone. I do not intend to review it, because there is little to be said either for or against such a work. As opera it was no more the real thing than is a set of gramophone records and as cinema it was no more a film than is a broadcast of a stage performance, radio drama. To make of it a film-opera, the whole thing would have had to be taken down and reassembled, and the obvious thing to be said about that is that *The Barber of Seville* was not written for that, but for the form in which we know it on the stage.

The Swedish film was quite another matter. To begin with, it was Swedish, which makes it another matter altogether from most other films. And it was very Swedish, which is to say it was solemn in the way that only a Swede can be when he's solemn; persistently. And also, in consequence, monotonously. The heaviness of *Ride To-night* may be in part due to the fact that Gustav Molander's directing has lost some of its magic; even more to the flat treatment of dialogue, which was so handled as to let a British spectator, at any rate, feel there was a great deal of static speaking. Molander has not Dreyer's gift, which lit or burnt the speeches in *Day of Wrath* into the texture of the pictures. But he has his own gifts. One of them is that particularly Scandinavian one of considering affairs of conscience and principle to be of interest. Another is of living, it would seem, in the air—which is, surely, what air is for.

Anyone who comes on *Ride To-night* will be taken into forests, under inexorably moving clouds, up mountain paths,

over rocks, and through streams. Anyone who has the luck or determination to see this film will, in short, live again. The spell, indeed, still works—the old Scandinavian spell. I do not know how many readers I can count on to have seen the early Stillers and Seastroms, even the early Molanders—*The Atonement of Gösta Berling*, *Arne's Treasure*, *The Manor House*, and the rest. They were achievements of a kind which has not been reached since, nor even essayed. They were of light and air, of skies majestic through trees, of man fulfilling his destiny beneath them—but related to them, so that life was a whole, as we forget now it can be.

The story of *Ride To-night* is set in the sixteenth century, when Sweden had emerged as a great power, but Queen Christina had given much land to her favourites, thereby turning into serfs the free-born peasants. The film is the story of their uprising. Made during the recent war, it owes something to the threat of occupation, something more to early Soviet films on the same theme. It has not the Soviet technique, and Scandinavian belief in the individual cuts across Soviet doctrine. The sum of small humanities matters more than the theme, which ought to be the rising of the peasants, but turns out to sidetrack into the importance of being true to one's self, of being fulfilled. This came out so strongly that now and again I felt the director had to pull himself up and get on with the job, or—like a Russian director—was pulled up. In consequence, continuity suffered. The 'ride', which was the handing on of the fiery cross of insurrection, occasionally fell into abeyance. But the familiar Northern things took its place—the gallows oak, the mysterious hooded rider, the man who had 'lost his ears to save his neck' (a murderer who had escaped with his life on these terms). There was the girl suspected of witchcraft until she almost believed it herself, though it had been a coal sparking from the fire which had branded her breast. There was her lover, a farmer who stood up for his rights and for that became outlawed, living in the mountain forests. There were two sequences in connection with him which not only made worth while sitting in a cinema on a hot July evening, but almost the subsequent degradation of having subsequently to face Oxford Street's dis-civilization

to get home. One was his wounded flight over a swamp, pursued by villagers, startled birds calling, logs splashing, water sucking. The other was his rock-climbing in a storm. His earlier climbs had looked to me rather 'arranged', but this one had the horror of footholds slipping, rocks coming away in one's hand, and, with extremity almost reached, one's weakness flamed on by a lightning burst.

He himself, I felt, was rather a bore. He Meant Well. But he seemed to spend more time in telling other people their business than in showing them, by example, that his was theirs. As they were all sixteenth-century peasants rising for the first time, this was perhaps understandable, but it was neither engaging nor very entertaining. Svedige Took Things to Heart. He was the sort of person who to-day would spoil your own drink of tea by refusing sugar in his, because 'you haven't got enough' (or, as someone said to me lately, 'if you have, you shouldn't have,' which seemed to me not-having it both ways). In short, Svedige Put People's Backs Up unnecessarily. But his virtues had won for him a most charming girl and he had one of those majestic peasant-mothers which Scandinavian actresses play so well. In addition to the astringent truth of this old girl, and the almost Alpine sweetness of the young one, the film is full of the good creaking of wooden latches, the lowing of calves, the turmoil of streams, crackle of twigs, and if air could be photographed, or its current recorded, here it is. I do not think that *Ride To-night* entirely did what it set out to do; to starved urban audiences I rather fancy its message was less that of the fiery cross than of the windswept sky and theunforced beauty of landscape.

Landscape should also be the mainstay of a film of *Ramuntcho*, as its description is one of the reasons for the continued being of Pierre Loti's novel. As a matter of fact there is not very much of it in the film, nothing like as much as there should be. First, the Pyrenees themselves are insufficiently established. As the result of this, the distinction between the Basque end of the range and any other parts goes by the board. Next, we get very little feel of the village as a whole, the relation of the characters' homes to the other houses and—fatal flaw in anything, book, play, or picture dealing with the Basques—no

feel of the Atlantic. I doubt if anyone could tell, from seeing this picture, the difference between a Basque house and those on either side of the rest of the *Pics Noirs*.

However, for such landscape as there was, the critics fell so hard that they could scarcely notice the other aspect—that of Basque morality, which not even Pierre Loti himself, with all his romanticizing, could obliterate. They only observed that towards the end, the film tailed off. In fact, it began. For this failure to receive the real essence of the story, I think the critics themselves must be held partly to blame, for I found few of the notices allowed one to think they were as familiar with the book, or even its language, as they might have been. But I think those responsible for the film's presentation at the Academy missed a chance, indeed almost the duty, of seeing that it was understood by English audiences. A Frenchman filming *Ramuntcho* would have nothing to explain to French spectators; such a detail as the hero's buying of *espadrilles* on his return from military service would be seen by them as symbolic as, to us, the donning by a Scotsman of his kilt. But English filmgoers need to know, it seems, that the *pays Basque* is not just a piece of regional quaintness, with a vigorous game called *pelota* and some dances which seem comic when their age-old religious significance is not grasped. Like the Welsh, the Basques are a wise and ancient race, living in a foreign land, and this should be stated.

A third reason for the film's failure to make its full impression is that it has a shocking script and a really shocking actor in the main role. The scenes jerk along with no relation to each other save dramatic content, and the part of *Ramuntcho* is played by a young man who gives no suggestion of a Basque, only of a Parisian *matinée* idol, if that. He is the type you see on tinted postcards, pressing a brilliantined head close to that of a fluffy blonde in a country landscape, wreathed in daisies, with a caption underneath 'Souvenir de Lyon' or Lille. Sometimes he holds a straw hat, sometimes he sits on a stile. But never never should he appear in the blouse and beret of a Basque.

The wreck caused by this casting is, however, rescued—more or less—by the surrounding players, chief among whom

is Jouvett. There is no need to say any more about Jouvett except that in this film, in addition to all his other qualities, he adds that of seeming to become a Basque. He is at home, whether in the hills smuggling or in the café plotting, twitting the excisemen, promising to bring the curé some tobacco.

Mme Françoise Rosay plays the mother of Gracieuse, and plays it as only she could. But, curiously, she does not seem at home in her kitchen and seems mainly a visiting actress imitating the locals. Hers is a small part and, perhaps through the cutting, it seems smaller than it is. For the same reason, the oddity of the montage, the Sister Superior, the mother of Ramuntcho and her old friend seem more impressive.

The smuggling scenes were done with gusto and glee, and there was a certain *naïveté* about the lovers which I found refreshing. Theirs was not a wooing in the conventional sense—boy did not find girl, he had always known her. They had grown up together and grown into love. Life apart was unthinkable. The story is well known, so I have no need to detail it here. But what I will detail is the part where, it is alleged, the film becomes dull. After Ramuntcho has been persuaded to enlist, to avoid the exciseman's jealous vengeance, Gracieuse is bullied into a convent by her mother. She does not know that her mother, incensed that she should marry a young man who has no father, has persuaded Sister Superior to stop his letters. Sister Superior acts quite honestly, as the girl is there to forget earthly things. But the girl thinks she has been deserted.

She is about to take her final vows. Her brother visits her, bringing with him her returned lover. Sister Superior at a glance is aware. She leaves them together. She tells the girl to see her friends to their trap when they leave. She herself goes to the chapel to pray.

She prays that Gracieuse will have strength.

Gracieuse does have strength. She returns. She had not left with the men. She had not taken the chance Sister Superior had given.

Partly because—and this is important—Ramuntcho himself (badly as he was acted) had said, in effect, 'To snatch back to the world one who has renounced it, would be the worst

rape.' Possibly you can only say this in French—the actual metaphor, I think, was rifling the grave of the dead. Possibly even to think and feel it, you have to be French—or at any rate, not English. The whole attitude of one sex to the other, and the eternal fear in the male in Catholic countries—the clash between human and divine love, the intangible rival, the Church he himself obeys—all this, whatever one may think of its merits or demerits, is intensely dramatic.

So Gracieuse returned. She knelt down in prayer by Sister Superior, whose own prayer turned into a pæan that one more sheep was added to the fold, that Gracieuse had been given strength. But not for long. The strain had told. In the midst of her prayer she collapsed.

Whereat Sister Superior took it on herself to say, 'Lord, perhaps the sacrifice is too great,' and released her from her vows. Mark that. And so the girl herself returned to the lover who had at first come to take her away and then found he could not do violence to her love or to his love. I do not think this is mawkish or morbid. I found it in its implications moving, but more than that, provocative of thought, and for intellectual exercise I am grateful.

All this is the last part of the film. The rest—the smuggling, the scenery, the occasional glimpse of folk-lore—speaks for itself, and has been spoken for. The end has been dismissed. That is why I have spoken for it myself, for it seems to me, in its conflict and on the plane at which that conflict takes place, something it would be a pity to miss.

ERRATA

It is regretted that carelessness in proof-reading on the part of the Editor led to misprints in last month's review of *The Rise of the Spanish American Empire*. On page 157, 17th line, 'the executioner is the victim' should have read 'in the victim', and six lines lower, 'patter' should have read 'pattern'. On page 160, 14th line, 'not infernal' should have been 'now infernal', and in the next line 'a distant Saturn' should have been 'or distant Saturn'. I sincerely apologize both to the reviewer, Violet Clifton, and to our readers for these errors.—R. H.

PASSAGE OF MUSIC

MAX KENYON

By the word 'music' is usually colloquially meant the art of Bach, Mozart, Chopin, and the rest. We could add to this, popular songs, Hymns Ancient and Modern, and dance music such as waltzes, together with military marches and nursery songs. This sort of collection of ideas is what people usually mean when they say 'are you fond of music?' 'She is taking music lessons' usually means that she is learning to play the piano: 'name a great composer of music' expects a reply like 'Mozart'. Now it may be that there is no crisis in music, taking music in this sense, for the whole art may be completed, and future generations may see the musical art of the past three hundred years as something limited in time and space, in time, to 1600-1900 (very roughly) and in space to Western Europe and to those overseas countries taking their culture from that limited area.

To explain this, I feel it necessary to go back to any period before the Renaissance. As far as we can tell, music then meant either that sort of metric noise useful in performing such manual feats as pulling on a rope, or the much more dignified and important non-metrical music associated with religion in both its ritualistic and domestic aspects. The Arab sings now much (it is thought) as he has always done, using instruments whose shape and stringing has remained unvaried for many centuries, and performing music which has been handed down by aural tradition only. For a marriage, such and such music is appropriate: for a funeral, some other unmeasured series of tones is what has always been used.

'Unmeasured' is the word to use here: the Arab singing to what we might call his lute makes a noise more similar to the medieval plainsong of monks than either sound is to the crowded scented Mass of a Cathedral using Gounod. The break in tradition between plainsong and the baroque or

romantic liturgical music which is still often used is much plainer than the difference between plainsong and the music of the Orient. For these two are alike in having nothing to which you can beat time, in being learnt by ear, in the musical phrases always being associated with certain traditional words, and in the notes following upon one another in pitch so as to be quite unplayable on an instrument like a modern organ or pianoforte.

Not only this; the song of birds is nearer plainsong or Oriental music than it is to any song by Schubert (but we might perhaps except the thrush and cuckoo): the music of nature, a stream, or an infant piping away to himself, or a happy man in a bath, all share the qualities of being unmeasurable both in pitch and metre with plainsong and the music of the Orient and of many American aborigines. The whole world was quite innocent of anything resembling what we call music from the infinitely far away beginnings of things, through all the civilization we know about until the time of the Renaissance. And then the measured music of exact pitch pleased only Western Europeans and to this day remains a mystery, so far as its spiritual and æsthetic connotations go, to the East. We need no reminder that the East is much larger in area and in population than the West. On this rolling ball what we call music has existed for a very short space of time and has been created in one single insignificant area. This area indeed is a triangle so small that its corners are about London, Leningrad, and Naples. This music is now probably disappearing for ever.

The change from the universal unmeasured music of man and of nature began to take place in the Christian church during the second millennium, and came about by the voices in the choirs not choosing to sing in unison, but preferring to enter with their words the one after the other. Each 'point' (as each phrase was called) had to be countered with some other 'point', and counterpoint demands some sort of accent so that the voices may be certain that the right points coincide: it also, if it is to be pleasing to us, demands a definite pitch for each note. In turn, this demands a definite scale. The ear, in our jargon, became more 'refined' until, at the time when

it was thought interesting by the intelligentia of Florence to produce Greek plays complete with Greek music, musical sense demanded that clarity and precision which are the marks of music as we understand it.

Not that the Florentines were successful, if only because no one knew what Greek music sounded like. Poets wrote little books of mythological drama and the Florentine musicians set the speeches and songs to ecclesiastical music, contrapuntal or with one part predominating over an instrumental accompaniment, and so opera was born. Opera demands exact timing: the hero must pace across the stage, the heroine must enter exactly as he reaches the altar, and start her aria exactly as he plunges the dagger into his heart. Metrical music is clearly essential to opera. Quite as essential is exact pitch for the notes in relation to each other, so that the voices may be in tune with those instruments in the orchestra which were fixed in tone, such as the cembalo.

From this art grew the very clear, subtle, and amazingly flexible art of Mozart, composers like Bach by the use of contrapuntal interlinking phrases often retaining something of the endless song of plainchant, until music began to obtain its effects by elongating and making heavier the balanced classic art. A decadence is not necessarily less beautiful than classical perfection, an autumn than high spring. The brown glories of autumn need the greens of June in the same way that the abundant Romantics required, and used up, their predecessors. And a time came when it seemed that there was nothing left to say. Everything had been done, and the decade or so after the death of Wagner saw such enormous orchestras playing such grandiose symphonies and operas that further extension seemed impossible. The last brown leaf fell: the tree was bare.

But metrical music made on the artificial key system did not die suddenly. It was born through decades, and is dying in the same way. At its most perfect, it sacrificed metrical perplexity and note to note subtlety for the sake of rhythmic organization and balanced periods. It is not necessary to enlarge on the fact that metrical simplicity can be the basis of considerable rhythmic subtlety. At the end of the decadence,

everything was complicated, metre, melody, and the use of modulation.

Perhaps we may take Debussy as the first of the iconoclasts, whose imaginery M. Croche would march out of the concert hall after a symphonic exposition on the grounds that he had already heard the music and need not submit himself to the endless developments and repetitions. Soon not only the tempered scale of the pianoforte but the major and minor modes themselves came to be ignored. Some composers went to the usages of the Renaissance and before, others imported from the East, while a third set attempted to break up the symmetrical prosody into prose.

Several writers have drawn a parallel of prose and verse, non-metrical and metrical music. Prose music is the universal, natural, Oriental, and plainsong sort: unmeasured, with its own non-metrical rhythm. Poetic music is the artificial measured music of the opera, with its major and minor modes. Modern composers, Bartok, for instance, would use metrical patterns of some mild oddity in a very fast tempo, with the result that the numerous vulgar fractions of the time signature resolved themselves, like a catherine wheel on which had been printed an intricate pattern, into something quite simple, something quite foursquare. Prosody cannot be broken down into prose by speaking intricate verses quickly. Prose is something quite different.

It may be that future writers may take as a convenient date for the ending of specifically Western music the first world war of 1914-18, in which an Austrian, Schonberg, composer of extremely romantic music, went into that modern monastery, the Army. Cut off from creative activity of his usual sort, his brain meditated at peace, while his body performed the meaningless drill of all armies, on the problems of music. It seem to him that he could not longer write anything new and worth playing in the tradition of Western music as hitherto known. And a system of composition came into his brain, as a discovery, 'like stout Cortez,' which would use the notes of the tempered scale in a manner quite different from any hitherto employed. This atonal system, though discovered through the subconscious and an 'inspiration', nevertheless

has to be applied with quite as much intellectual energy as counterpoint, and is therefore quite different from the traditional music of the world at large. But it has this about it: it sounds quite different from anything else: equally different from plainsong and from Mozart.

While some composers plod along with their compromises, of folk song set into a symphonic background, of modal or whole tone harmony, the atonal and polymetric composers produce quite new sounds, sounds, however, which seem to have little æsthetic meaning. It seems likely that a real return to the music of the world, the sort of music already too often mentioned in this article, of birds, of plainsong, of the Orient, of the happy child 'tunelessly' (as we say) whistling, cannot be arrived at by the intellectual application of a system, however beautiful that system in its organization and possibilities may be. And quite certainly a rhythmic freedom akin to that of prose cannot possibly be produced by complicating metres. There seems, therefore, no contemporary hint of the music of the future: of the music of the past that, except in imitation, is dead.

If we observe how Western music started, and note that its progenitors tried to recreate something old and instead created something quite new, we may wonder if direct attack, as made by Bartok and Schonberg, is more likely to succeed than music written for a practical purpose. Listening to Auric's *La Symphonie Pastorale* in which, besides normal Western music, we have such things as the scrunch of snow, it occurs to us that possibly it is from cinema music that a new art may develop. It will not do so by any act of will, but the mixture of natural music with measured music, the lack of any necessity in 'canned' music for it, as a whole, to have a definite pitch, and the nature of much cinema music which does not metrically follow the action (an accent every time the foot of the heavy father falls), allows, in theory, for cinema music to follow some quite new course of its own. But before it may do so, perhaps the original music, before the canning, requires the perfection of an electrotonic music machine, allowing of one player only. For unless the new music is to be in unison or in parallel motion, an orchestra will always require some strong beats. But this will probably not be in our time.

If, as I think, music is already relapsing into the state of natural and world music, and the Western Experiment or the Western Isolation, as it may be called, is over, my emotion is of wonder. Of wonder of the great art which sprang quickly up and reached such heights and maintained such heights for so long; an art which has had for its votaries a fascination and a power so very penetrating and psychological.

MAX KENYON is a contributor to several musical periodicals, and writes three weekly columns of gramophone record reviews. He is a MS. reader for book publishers, and on the business staff of Time and Tide.

RATTLER MORGAN

by CHARLES CAUSLEY

Now his eyes are bright farthings
And he spindles
In seas deeper than death.
His lips are no longer wet with wine
But gleam with green salt
And the Gulf Stream is his breath.

Now he is fumbled by ancient tides
Among decks flagged with seaweed
But no flags sees he there.
His fingers are washed to stone
And to phosphor
And there are starfish in his hair.

H.M.S. Cabbala.

TYPOGRAPHERS TO-DAY

ALEC DAVIS

THE typographer's occupation is not well known, even among those who love books. There are people, by no means uneducated, who have to think twice to remember which is which of typography and topography; and it may be as well to quote a definition—that of Joseph Moxon, in his *Mechanick Exercises* of 1683:

By a typographer [he wrote] I do not mean a printer any more than Dr Dee means a carpenter or a mason to be an architect; but by a typographer I mean such a one, who by his own judgement . . . can either perform or direct others to perform . . . all the handiworks and physical operations relating to typography.

This definition was highly individual—and prophetic, for Moxon's contemporaries used the word *typographer* as a synonym for *printer*, and this remained its common usage until our own day; only within the last quarter-century has it been generally credited with the meaning that Moxon attributed to it. When we speak of a typographer nowadays we mean someone who may or may not be a practical printer, but is experienced in the *design* of printed matter. The emphasis is on ability to design, not to execute, good printing.

'Before 1918 design as a distinct proceeding in the making of a printed article was rare; and it was done amateurishly, that is to say, for the love of the thing, either by an amateur or as a sideline by a person having some other function in the industry. . . . As a means of livelihood the occupation of typographer came into being after the 1914-1918 war.'¹ Inevitably there have been protests against the invasion of the ancient craft of book-production by this upstart class. It has been said that the typographer deprives the printer of all scope for creative ability in the books he prints, reducing him to the

¹ H. G. Carter in *The Spectator*, 21st June, 1946.

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level of one who carries out another's orders. This argument seems to overlook the fact that ever since publishing and printing became separate businesses the publisher, by virtue of paying the printer, could call the type-tune; he had the right to dictate details of book-design, and it was a right which sometimes at least he exercised.

The emergence of the book-designer or typographer, as an employee or a paid consultant of the publishing house, means that the tune-calling is now done by someone who (in theory, at any rate) combines the amateur's good taste with a professional knowledge of type-faces, their arrangement on the page, their use in conjunction with illustrations, their suitability to various printing techniques and various kinds of paper—all the subjects that I have touched on in previous notes in these pages, and many more.

That typographical design should have come to be regarded as a task worthy of someone's full-time attention is surely inevitable. Not only inevitable because, in the glib phrase of the correspondence courses, This is the Age of Specialization, but inevitable also because of the social changes of our time. The trend towards a levelling of incomes has meant, first, that fewer people who possess good taste and the urge to create, possess also the leisure and the income necessary to print fine editions in non-profit-making private presses. Second, it has meant also that more people buy books—and a higher percentage of them take an interest in appearance as well as contents. Formerly the designer's care was lavished most often on limited editions from non-commercial presses—books published for collectors rather than readers. To-day the aim is to produce more readable and better-looking editions of books that people want to read, at prices which a fair number of them can afford to pay.

Having accepted the professional typographer as inevitable, we may still question his desirability. He has carved out a comfortable niche for himself; but has he been of any service to his fellow-men—conferred any benefit on the Common Reader? I do not pretend that he has been an *unmixed* blessing. The newness of his vocation has tempted into it a few charlatans, whose bluff is the despair of printers and, when it is eventually

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called, of publishers also. And there is always a risk that the typographer's professional status may give him a vested interest that outweighs his sense of proportion; he may come to consider the manner of a book's presentation as more important than its matter—a dangerous view, since typographical *tours de force* are seldom if ever an aid to reading.

Our final estimate of the value of his achievement must be based on comparison of the appearance of typical English books to-day—Zodiacs and Gollancz', Penguins and Guilds—with their counterparts of fifty or forty or even twenty-five years ago. Recently, when on holiday with no conscious thought of making such comparison, I bought in a second-hand book shop a copy of *Pickwick Papers* published in 1904. It included the original illustrations (that was the main reason why I bought it) and I am re-reading it with pleasure; but my pleasure would be greater if it were not printed in a mean, narrow, colourless type-face that offends the eye consciously, and subconsciously I am sure lessens the desire to read and to continue reading. No decent publisher would allow his imprint to appear on a book set in a type like this to-day; not only book exhibitions, but the stock-in-trade of any book shop would show that we print more legibly and nobly now.

If you share my opinion that there has been great improvement, you must give much of the credit for it to the typographer. In these hours when standards, as well as heavens, are falling, it is no mean achievement to have *raised* the standard of popular book design.

The Man who Made Music

This novel concerns a quest for a composer of genius, which leads from Tenerife to London. It is a story not only of physical adventure, but of adventure in the mind as well, with a quality of strangeness that compels the attention from the opening pages. Music is both the force and the background of the book, and Froom Tyler is well qualified to write on the subject since he himself is a music critic of distinction, as well as being editor of the *Overseas Daily Mail* and a veteran of journalism. *8s. 6d. net*

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Froom Tyler

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PUBLICATION

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

THE SYMPHONIES OF MOZART. G. DE SAINT-FOIX.

Translated from the French by LESLIE ORREY. Dennis Dobson. 8s. 6d.

A FEW weeks ago Scotland honoured M. de Saint-Foix with a doctorate from Edinburgh University. It is therefore peculiarly fitting that the English translation of *The Symphonies of Mozart* should appear about the same time.

For many years now the names of M. de Saint-Foix and his collaborator Wyzewa have been closely associated with Mozart scholarship. Their *Life of Mozart*, the English translation of which is promised by the same publishing house, was a pioneer work not only in biographical accuracy, but in knocking down the false attitude which the nineteenth century and its Wagnerians (though not Wagner himself) took to Mozart's music. To them, he was 'classical', Olympian, remote, politely melancholy. To M. de Saint-Foix and all true Mozartians, he is passionate, tender, witty, intellectual—in fact, the whole sum total of nearly all that matters in life and art!

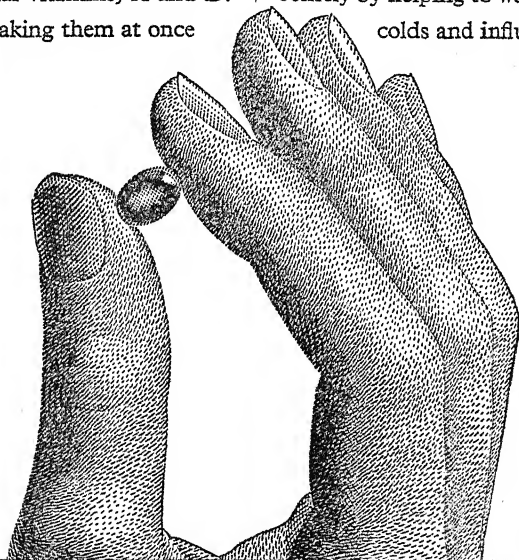
As a devoted Mozartian I welcome *The Symphonies of Mozart* enthusiastically. The author demonstrates the twelve or so periods of Mozart's symphonic activity—a division sometimes sneered at by the insensitive and the ignorant, but none the less real—and gives penetrating analyses of the influences of varying environment and other composers on Mozart's style. The analyses of the symphonies themselves are all characterized by such love and insight that they have something to reveal even to those who, like myself, are on exceedingly familiar terms with most of them.

This book, together with the promised *Life*, and Einstein's recent *Mozart—his Character, his Work* (Cassels, 21s.) is the permanent testimony of the twentieth century's real understanding of one of the world's greatest composers—if not, indeed, the greatest. It has taken over a hundred and fifty years for the general musical public to realize that there is more, far more, in Mozart's music than tinkling eighteenth century prettiness—that there is the transformation of almost everything a man

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can experience into profoundly satisfying music, which sometimes seems, to me at any rate, to make the religions of the world superfluous.

Not long ago a fairly well-known pianist addicted to playing Liszt told me that she didn't think the Mozart concertos worth her while. Amongst some of our prominent performers and conductors alike the true position still is that neither soloist nor orchestra can 'get away with it' on Mozart. He demands musical qualities of so fine an order that performances which lack them seem flat, even to the not over-sensitive. I hope that these recent books may persuade conductors to let us hear more of the lesser known symphonies, seranades, and dances, and pianists to lay aside their old 'romantic' war-horses in favour of the earlier concertos.

Finally, a word about the translation. Having recently had occasion to translate M. de Saint-Foix's essay on Boccherini, I have every sympathy with Mr. Orrey, for the French writer's style is often irritatingly ornate. Readers should not be put off by some of the apparently un-English phrases which are to be found throughout the book. The faithful translator could hardly leave them out, and in any case the book is so pregnant with musical wisdom that oddities of style are of no real significance.

MAURICE LINDSAY

MAN AND THE ATOM. C. E. VULLIAMY. Michael Joseph. 8s. 6d.

OUR lack of interest, even boredom, at the fact of atomic fission is rather puzzling. The condemned, according to tradition, always eat hearty breakfasts, and this rule would seem capable of universal application. Why are we so indifferent, so callous? Why are we in Britain so certain that all the fuss, forming of societies, public confessions, and alarms of the U.S.A. are futile?

Mr. Vulliamy's answer, and I am sure he is correct, is that the problem is not created by Hiroshima, but is wider and is moral. Mr. Vulliamy says 'exclusively moral', but I suspect that it is one not merely of morals but of the whole nature and status of value, though I don't think we would dispute very violently over that.

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But, if he is right, how does Mr. Vulliamy treat this moral problem? By a series of observations, often disconnected, on prehistory, on philosophy, on the history of philosophy, on modern physics, and on politics. These observations vary enormously in intrinsic value and, taken together, present no very clear whole. What is more, I suspect that many of the scientific observations are so incomplete or generalized as to be unsatisfactory, and I am sure that this is true of Mr. Vulliamy's philosophy. The value of the book is in its asides, its humane scepticism, its righteous indignations, and these make it worth reading with the attention that the ease of its language makes possible.

What is to me most surprising, however, is that to Mr. Vulliamy, satirist of our grandparents' habits and writer on archæology, should so far have been left this task which the professionals—moralists, philosophers, and theologians—have not yet attempted. No better proof of Mr. Vulliamy's thesis of moral failure could be given, and in this surely is the justification of *Man and the Atom*. DONALD G. MACRAE

INSIDE OUT: AN ESSAY IN THE PSYCHOLOGY AND
ÆSTHETIC APPEAL OF SPACE. ADRIAN STOKES. Faber
and Faber. 8s. 6d.

THE problem is a real one. With differing cultures and periods the concept of space transforms itself and new discoveries are made. To give concrete and obvious examples: the Greek temple creates a space self-contained and satisfied; the Gothic penetrates into space with arch or spire or strides through it; the sculpture of Benin is drawn and pulled to a maximum economy which is also a complexity from within.

How then does Mr. Stokes deal with the theme?

Not historically or comparatively or by concentrating (like Worringer) on some particular problem, but autobiographically, by giving an account of the growth of his own psyche, his own sensibility. This subjective approach is clearly legitimate and, if successful, informative, but I do not think Mr. Stokes succeeds. For one thing his style is always ornate, usually obscure and sometimes¹ atrocious. For another, his own

¹ v, page 48.



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experience as described here seems neither catholic nor rich enough to reward such study. Nor, for a third, is Mr. Stokes' purpose clear from page to page. Some interesting comments on Cezanne cannot modify the harshness of this judgment.

I may lack the sympathy to believe and be illuminated by this book: then I can only record my incapacity. But I should like to make it clear that other of Mr. Stokes' writings have, though uneven, seemed to me as helpful as this elegant seventy-two page pamphlet is disappointing.

DONALD G. MACRAE

THE BRITISH MUSEUM LIBRARY. ARUNDELL ESDAILE.

Allen and Unwin. 15s.

I CAN no longer think of the British Museum Library as an impersonal institution. Mr. Esdaile's history has given me a glimpse of the men whose loyalty and scholarship have gone to make this one of the greatest libraries in the world. Donors, Trustees, Staff—he shows how the temperament of each had its bearing upon the story of the Museum. The later portraits, done on more direct acquaintance (Mr. Esdaile was formerly Assistant Keeper in the Department of Printed Books and Secretary to the Trustees), are particularly good. It is a well-knit, serious, concise account; 'librarianly' with all that that conveys of method and of respect for truth.

The first chapters describe the early growth of the Museum Library from certain collections bequeathed to the Crown, notably those of Sir Hans Sloane, Robert Cotton, and the Harleys. The Museum was founded in 1753, one of the last of the great libraries whose growth began with the Renaissance. Incidentally, it is remarkable how easily the idea of democracy in letters was accepted centuries before it gained any ground in social or political matters. The preamble to the Statutes and Rules, drawn up in 1757, states that 'altho' it was chiefly designed for the use of learned and studious men, both natives and foreigners, in their researches into the several parts of knowledge; yet being founded at the expence of the public, it may be judged reasonable, that the advantages accruing from it should be rendered as general as may be consistent with the several considerations above mentioned'. The prerogatives of learning were early dissociated from wealth: few saw anything

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to object to in a provision of books for 'all studious and curious persons', when a provision of almost anything else would have been thought quixotic.

Another point of interest is the number of Europeans who, down the years, have contributed richly to the scholarship and administration of the Museum (as they have, of course, in all our institutions). We have no cause to doubt the wisdom of our hospitality. There were the Huguenots, Maty and Planta, later scholars such as Deutsch and the Swiss Charles Rieu, and, most eminent of all, the Italian refugee Panizzi, who a hundred years ago conceived of the Museum in terms still modern to-day. As one of the monuments of Western culture the Museum must continue to seek without prejudice the best man for the job.

At the present time we have a special need for administrators with open minds and a more than national outlook. Spiritual values of centuries are imperceptibly shifting to defensive positions as other more material standards spread. At the same time, we can do with all that modern technique and material can afford. What cannot photography and prefabrication do (to mention only two things) for the eternal problem of space in libraries?

Mr. Esdaile's account stops at 1939. It is a full and valuable record; in Part II, where each of the collections is dealt with individually, the notes of the catalogues make up a complete list. There are appendices on legal and technical matters and many notes containing delightful anecdotes—the piquant sauce for a meaty dish.

GWEN MARSH

THE WATERSHED. ARTHUR CALDER-MARSHALL. Contact Publications. 8s. 6d.

IN recording his experiences gained researching materials for a Ministry of Information film on the post-war problems of Yugoslavia, Mr. Calder-Marshall has produced a genuinely 'documentary' book. For, however much the word 'documentary' might be appropriated exclusively by the film industry, and then applied haphazardly to any non-fiction product, a travalogue, pretty-pretty pictures of nothing in particular, the word has a meaning and a meaning which this

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book would seem to exemplify. A document, in the sense in which certain films and books and other manifestations are documentary, is an interpretation of reality in terms of its own meaning. Which means a thesis.

Mr. Calder-Marshall discovered that there was a very important thesis of which the Yugoslavian facts were the interpretation and his book is documentary to the extent to which he has integrated his impressions to this theme. Briefly, Mr. Calder-Marshall asserts that there was a fundamental weakness implicit in using the past participle of the verb *to unite* for the United Nations: instead, he maintains, we should have known who were meant and what tasks were demanded of us had the post-war nations been described in the present tense, as the *Uniting Nations*. And it is precisely this sense of the nations as not united yet, but uniting, uniting themselves before they can unite with others, which is conveyed in *The Watershed* with its vivid pictures of the new Yugoslavia which is arising from the old disunity of Serb, Croat, Magyar, and Moslem. Yugoslavia is the watershed whence pour the waters of reaction and revolution, tradition and invention, flowing East and West. This record shows us that it is not there that the water tends to get muddied, nor its teeming life to proliferate as poisonous weeds.

When Mr. Calder-Marshall was briefed to go out to Egypt, Italy, and Yugoslavia in those critical days of 1945 nobody seems to have mentioned the word 'documentary', not, anyhow, in the sense in which it means something. He was simply told to explore the possibilities of turning some dreary stuff, that had already been shot long before by the Army Film Unit, into a film about UNRRA and Yugoslavia; a few extra shots might, they thought, be needed to make a coherent picture out of this material. Almost the first thing that Mr. Calder-Marshall realized, and never had any subsequent cause to query, was that a completely new film would have to be made into which a few of the old shots might be fitted if any were good enough. In which profound story lie all the parables, fables, and moralizings to which the story of Yugoslavia and all the other *Uniting Nations* can be reduced.

F. J. BROWN

